

CONCISE VIEW
OF THE
LEADING DOCTRINES
CONNECTED WITH THE
SOCINIAN CONTROVERSY.

EDINBURGH :
PRINTED FOR WAUGH & INNES ;
LE, GLASGOW ; J. NISBET, AND F. WESTLEY, LONDON ;
H. GREER, BELFAST ; AND R. M. TIMS, DUBLIN.

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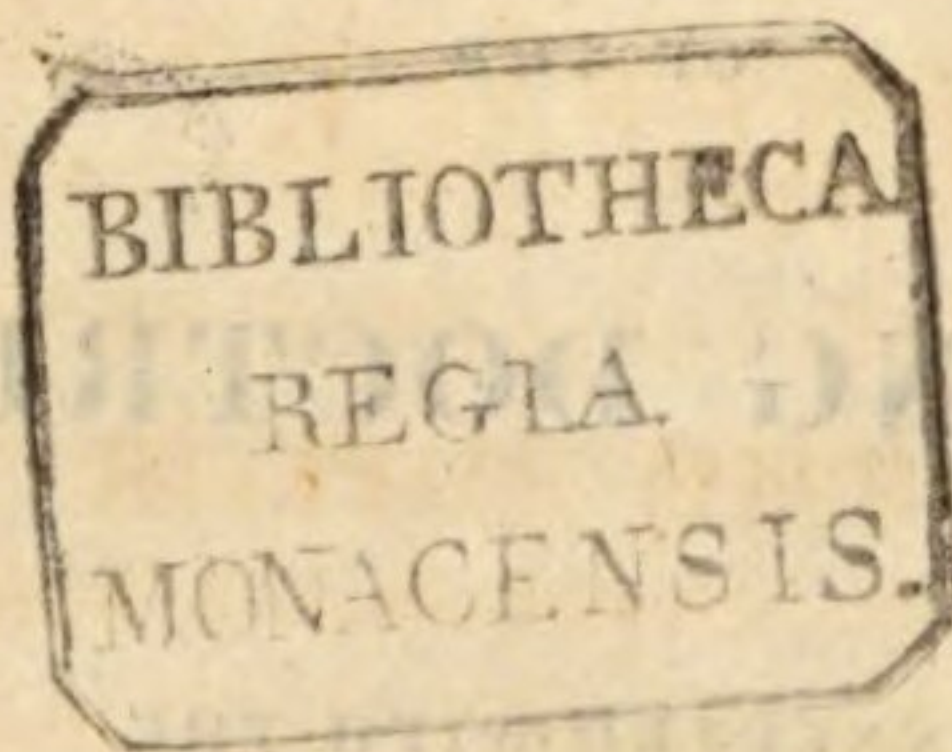
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Printed by A. Balfour & Co.

PREFACE

BY THE EDITOR.

THE publication of the following extracts was suggested to the Editor, in consequence of more than usual exertions having of late been made, to disseminate the Socinian doctrines in this city. He considered it an important duty to use every means to guard all classes of professing Christians against what he conceives so extremely dangerous an error.

While Christians ought certainly to cultivate a spirit of mutual forbearance, amidst

a diversity of sentiment on those points of minor importance, on which almost all acknowledge there is room for the disciples of Christ to differ in opinion ; yet they ought ever to distinguish between these, and such doctrines as affect the very foundation of the Christian faith. It may be often difficult, indeed, to draw the line between truths that are essential and such as are not, but it is not at all difficult to say of certain doctrines that they lie either on the one side of this line or the other.

Thus, no one, we conceive, who is not very much under the influence of bigotry, would say, that a certain view of the external order of the Christian church was an essential truth,—or, in other words, that the genuine disciples of Christ do not think differently on this subject. On the other hand, it seems as plain, that correct views respecting the person of Christ, and the design of his death, form an essential part of a Christian's faith : and that nothing can be more inconsistent with

every principle of sound thinking, than to suppose that it is of little moment whether we view that exalted Being, who is revealed in the Scriptures under the character of the Saviour, as a mere man, or as possessed of the nature of the Godhead ; or whether his death is to be considered as merely a testimony to the truth of his doctrine, or as making an atonement to divine justice for the sins of the world. These manifestly involve two totally opposite systems, respecting points which, from their nature, must be considered fundamental ; systems so opposite, that with no propriety can they go by the same name. If the one be Christianity, the other is not. If the one be right, the other is radically and essentially wrong.

Thus, when I look into the word of God, I see the Christian revelation addressed to me as a sinner. It is when I contemplate, then, my character in this light ; when I feel that I am guilty in having transgressed a law which is infinitely reasonable and excellent ; that I see the peculiar value of the gospel, as discovering a way, in which, consistent-

ly with the divine justice and holiness, I can obtain forgiveness. It is this that shows me that this revelation is adapted to my circumstances. It is here that I see it meets my wants. It is this precise feature of it which renders it in my view so incalculably valuable. It is only when I view the gospel under this aspect that I can look forward to death and judgment, not only without alarm, but with well-grounded hope. But if you remove this, its distinguishing feature, you strip it of all its glory. If you tell me, while under a conviction of sin, that no atonement has been made for human guilt,—that there is nothing in the character of him who is revealed as a Saviour which rendered him capable of doing this,—that it is founded on a total misconception to suppose that this was the end designed to be accomplished by his death; what, I ask, is to be found in Christianity to justify those representations which the Scriptures universally contain of its peculiar and superlative value?

—a discovery which is not a discovery at all

I may be told, indeed, it reveals the doctrine of immortality much more clearly than ever it was known before. But this is only a blessing, if I have some assurance that it is to be to me an immortality of happiness. If it is added, that it contains a system of the purest morality; what consolation can this impart, if it is a morality which I have not practised? If it be true that where there is no law there is no transgression, will it not follow, that the more enlarged my views are of the excellence of the law, or in other words, of the claims of the righteous governor of the world, the greater must my guilt be in violating them, and, of course, the more must I be overwhelmed with confusion if I do not discover how this guilt is to be taken away?

The Editor, then, is particularly desirous that those who may read the following pages, should enter on the perusal of them fully impressed with a conviction that they relate to no subject of inferior moment, on

which it may be equally safe to hold different opinions ; but that the subjects discussed in them are of the most vital importance, and relate to the very foundation of our hopes, as guilty creatures, in the prospect of that eternity which lies before us.

By far the greater part of the following extracts is selected from the writings of Dr. Dwight of America, late President of Yale College, in Connecticut. All who have read his System of Theology, (a work but recently known in this country,) acknowledge that he has stated the argument on the Socinian controversy with great force. But as this publication is in 5 vols. 8vo. it was thought well worth while, by publishing his reasonings on this subject in a cheap form, to make them accessible to general readers at a moderate price. The principal parts of his statements on this subject are here introduced, selected and arranged in such a way as seemed calculated to place the argument in the most striking

point of view. These are followed by two extracts from Dr. Wardlaw's valuable work on the Socinian Controversy, which, if any reader is not yet acquainted with it, the Editor cordially recommends to his careful perusal. An additional extract from Dr. Dwight, containing some very important practical inferences, is next introduced; and, as a suitable conclusion to the whole, M'Laurin's eloquent and impressive Sermon on Glorifying in the Cross of Christ, very slightly abridged, is added in the appendix.

Those who have leisure to read more extensively on the subjects discussed in the following sheets, will find much useful information in Dr. (now Archbishop) Magee's very able work on the Atonement, and the late Mr. Fuller's Socinian and Calvinistic systems compared. It is well known that the late Dr. Priestley, who was very fond of controversy, and seldom omitted an opportunity of replying to an

opponent, never attempted an answer to this work.

It is fondly hoped that this small volume will be extensively useful, as the extracts contained in it are not only calculated to counteract Socinian errors, where they are avowedly embraced, or where attempts are made to propagate them, but also to communicate just views of the important topics to which they relate, among many, who, though far from holding or avowing such errors, through mere indolence and want of attention to the Scriptures, rest satisfied, if not in complete ignorance, at least, in the most vague and confused notions regarding the most essential doctrines of the Christian faith.

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DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

ROMANS viii. 3, 4.

“ For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh : that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

———In the *first* place, I will proceed to investigate THE CHARACTER OF THE PERSON WHO WAS THUS SENT.

The character given of him in the text, is plainly a singular one. He is called God's own Son, and is yet said to have been sent in the likeness of sinful flesh. These two great particulars, so unlike, so contrasted, form a character differing altogether from every other ; and demand a very diligent consideration. The first of them shall be the immediate object of our attention.

At our entrance upon the investigation of

this subject, the first thing which strikes the mind is, that it is a subject of mere revelation. Without the Scriptures, there is no knowledge in this world that such a person exists. The philosopher, therefore, has no other concern with this subject, except either to believe or disbelieve the testimony which the Scriptures give. By his own reason he can add nothing to what is revealed, and without impiety he can alter nothing.

Secondly, As revelation communicates to us our original knowledge of this subject, so it communicates to us all which we now know. The things which it testifies were not designed to be, neither can they become, the materials of future philosophical investigation and improvement. The knowledge which at this day exists concerning this subject, is all found in the Bible.

Thirdly, The things communicated concerning it, being communicated not in "the words which man's wisdom teacheth," but in those which "the Holy Ghost teacheth," are communicated in the best and wisest manner possible; the manner which was approved by infinite Wisdom. There is no error, no oversight; nothing superfluous, nothing defective. That, and that only, is taught, which God thought it proper to teach, in the manner which God thought it proper to adopt.

Fourthly, As the doctrines concerning this singular Person are of the highest moment to plain, uneducated men, as well as to men of

learning, it is certain that the things really revealed, are so revealed, that such men, acting with integrity, can understand them sufficiently to make them proper and useful objects of their faith. Of course, the terms in which they are revealed are used in such a manner as these men can understand. They are, therefore, used according to their plain, customary, obvious meaning; the meaning which they have in the usual intercourse of mankind. Of course, also, they have no technical, philosophical, or peculiar signification; because, if thus used, they could never be understood by such men, or, in other words, by almost the whole body of mankind.

Fifthly, Just so much is revealed concerning this extraordinary person, as it is useful for us to know. This truth is derived with absolute certainty from the wisdom and goodness of God. Whatever is revealed is revealed by this wisdom and goodness; and whatever is withheld is by the same wisdom and goodness withheld. That which is revealed, therefore, we are required by the authority of God to believe; and are bound to have no reference in our faith to that which is withheld. Whatever mysteries may be inferred, or may seem to be inferred, from the things actually revealed, can in no manner affect them, and ought in no manner to affect our faith in them. All that is taught is exactly true, and to be faithfully believed, although all that is true is not

taught, nor capable of being divined by such minds as ours.

Sixthly, Whatever is contained in the Scriptures concerning this subject, as concerning every other, that is, in the Scriptures as they now are, is to be regarded as unquestionably the word of God, unless proved not to be genuine by manuscript authority. Nothing is to be admitted with respect to this subject which would not be justifiably admitted with respect to any other scriptural subject. Particularly, all conjectural emendations of the text are to be rejected with scorn, as miserable attempts to mend the word of God according to the dictates of human philosophy. The reasonableness of this rule is too obvious to need illustration.

With these observations premised, I proceed to examine the character of this singular Person, denoted by the phrase, "God's own Son."

This text contains, among other things, the following important doctrine,

THAT JESUS CHRIST IS TRULY AND PERFECTLY GOD. This doctrine I shall attempt to maintain by a variety of considerations, arranged in the following manner :

I. I shall attempt to show, that Christ is spoken of in the Scriptures as the true and perfect God.

II. That the Deity of Christ is the only ground of consistency in the scheme of redemption.

III. That the Jews, according to the oppo-

site doctrine, are unjustly charged with guilt in putting Christ to death.

IV. That the prophets and apostles, according to the same doctrine, cannot be vindicated from the sin of leading mankind into idolatry.

I. I shall attempt to show, that Christ is spoken of in the Scriptures as the true and perfect God.

This argument may be advantageously exhibited by showing,

1st, That the names of God ;

2dly, That the attributes of God ;

3dly, That the actions of God ; and,

4thly, That the relations which God sustains to his creatures, are in the Scriptures ascribed to Christ ; and,

5thly, That divine worship is in the Scriptures required to be rendered, and by persons inspired was actually rendered, to Christ.

1. The names of God are in the Scriptures ascribed to Christ.

1st, He is directly called God.

John i. 1. " In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." In this passage St. John not only declares Christ to be God, but to be eternal. " In the beginning was the Word." And in the following verse he declares that he is co-eternal with God ; " The same was in the beginning with God ;"—words exactly equivalent to those in Proverbs viii. 23, 24. where the same truth is also asserted, " The Lord

possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." In the following verse, the Evangelist farther declares, that Christ was the Creator of the universe, and that "without him was not even one thing made which has been made*." In this passage of Scripture, St. John has not only declared that Christ is God, but, to prevent any possible mistake concerning what he meant by the word *God*, has told us, that he is co-eternal with God the Father, and that he is the Creator of every thing which exists. Were the Scriptures allowed to speak their own language, this single passage would decide the controversy; for it is impossible to declare in stronger language, or more explicit, that Christ is God in the highest sense, originally, and without derivation.

Rom. ix. 5. "Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." This passage cannot be evaded by any means, except a resolute denial.

1 Tim. iii. 16. "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory." Nothing is more evident than that these things are said of Christ, and that they can be said of

* See the original.

no other. No other person, and no attribute, can be said to be “God manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory.” Let any person make the experiment, and he will find it impossible to make the application of all these things to any other than the Redeemer.

Matt. i. 23. and Isa. vii. 14. “Behold a virgin shall conceive, and shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Emmanuel;” that is, “God with us.” Christ, therefore, is “God with us.”

There are many other passages in which Christ is directly called God. But these are sufficient to establish the point.

2dly, Christ is called the GREAT GOD.

Titus ii. 13. “Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” In the Greek it is “the Great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ,” or “our Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.” God the Father will not appear at the judgment. If then Christ is not “the Great God,” God will not appear at the judgment at all. *Kai*, the conjunction here used is rendered exactly in many cases by the English word “even;” particularly in the phrase, “God and our Father,” found Gal. i. 4. 1 Thess. i. 3. 2 Thess. ii. 16. &c. In the last of these places the translators have rendered it “even,” as they plainly ought to have done

in both the others, since the present rendering makes the apostle speak nonsense.

3dly, Christ is called the True God.

1 John v. 20. "In his Son Jesus Christ." "This," in the original, "this Person is the true God and eternal life." If this passage admits any comment, it must be that of Christ himself, who says, "I am THE life;" and that of the Evangelist, who, in the first chapter of this Epistle, and second verse, says, "For the life was manifested; and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal Life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us."

4thly, Christ is called the mighty God.

Psalms l. 1—3. "The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him." This Psalm is a prediction of the last judgment. In the first verse, the person who comes to judge the world, and who speaks the things recorded in this Psalm, is called AL, ALEIM, JEHOVAH; and is exhibited as calling mankind before him, "from the rising of the sun to his going down." In the second, he is represented as "shining," or displaying his glory, "out of Zion;" that is, by his dispensations to his church. In the third, is described the awful splendour with

which he will appear, the fire which shall consume, and the convulsion which shall rend asunder the world, at that great and terrible day. But Christ alone will appear on that day; and at his presence “the heavens shall pass away with a great noise;” and by “the flaming fire” with which he will be surrounded, “the elements will melt with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein will be burnt up.” Christ, therefore, is the God, the MIGHTY God, the JEHOVAH, who is here mentioned.

5thly, Christ is called the God of Israel.

Exod. xxiv. 9, 10. “Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. And they saw the God of Israel.” Psalm lxviii. 17, 18. “The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels. The Lord is among them, as in Sinai, even the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men.” Eph. iv. 8. “Wherefore he saith, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it, but that he descended first into the lower parts of the earth. He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things: and he gave some apostles and some prophets,” &c. Here the apostle informs us, that the person who “ascended on high, and led captivity captive,” is Christ. The Psalmist informs us, that the

person who “ascended on high, and led captivity captive,” is the “Lord who appeared in Sinai.” And Moses informs us, that “the Lord who appeared in Sinai” was “the God of Israel.” We also know that “no man hath seen God the Father at any time.” Christ therefore is “the God of Israel.” Of course, “the God of Israel,” so often mentioned in the Old Testament, is every where peculiarly Christ.

6thly, Christ is called JEHOVAH.

Isa. vi. 1, 3. “In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw JEHOVAH * sitting on his throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple ; and one of the seraphim cried to another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of hosts :” and again, in the 5th, 8th, 11th, and 12th verses of the same chapter. St. John, quoting the 9th and 10th verses of this chapter in his Gospel, chapter xii. 40. says, “These things said Esaias, when he saw his (that is, Christ’s) glory, and spake of him.” To prove, beyond controversy, that Christ is the JEHOVAH OF HOSTS, here mentioned, I observe, that no person is spoken of in the chapter except Uzziah, JEHOVAH OF HOSTS, the seraphim, the prophet Isaiah, and the people of Israel. The seraphim and the people of Israel being mentioned only in the aggregate, must be laid out of the question. Christ therefore being, by the decision of the Evangelist,

* Lowth’s Notes on this verse.

spoken of in this chapter, must be either the prophet himself, King Uzziah, or JEHOVAH OF Hosts. It happens also, unfortunately for Unitarians, that the prophet saw the glory of no other person but JEHOVAH OF Hosts ; yet St. John assures us, he saw the glory of Christ. St. John's opinion on this subject we cannot mistake, if we remember that he commences his Gospel in this manner, " In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

2. I shall show that the peculiar attributes of God are ascribed to Christ in the Scriptures.

1st, Eternity.

Rev. i. 10, 11, &c. " I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last : and I turned to see the voice that spake with me ; and being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks ; and, in the midst of the seven candlesticks, one like unto the Son of Man : and when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead : and he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not, I am the First and the Last, I am he that liveth and was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen."

Rev. ii. 8. " These things saith the First and the Last, who was dead and is alive."

Isa. xlv. 6. " THUS SAITH JEHOVAH, King of Israel, and his Redeemer, JEHOVAH OF Hosts, I am the First and I am the Last, and beside me there is no God."

Isa. xlviii. 12. "Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel my called; I am he; I am the First; I also am the last. Mine hand, also, hath laid the foundation of the earth," &c.

In the two first of these passages, it will not, for it plainly cannot, be disputed, that the person spoken of by St. John, and afterwards speaking of himself, "who was like unto the Son of Man, who was dead, is alive, and liveth for evermore," was Christ; and this person, in four instances, declares himself to be "the First and the Last,"—the strongest assertion, that eternity past and to come belongs to himself. If he is the "First," none can have been before him; if he is the "Last," none can be after him.

In the two last passages from the prophet Isaiah, (the latter of which has, in the preceding Discourse, been clearly proved to be written concerning Christ,) JEHOVAH OF HOSTS, who declares that "beside himself there is no God," declares also that "he is the First, and that he is the Last." This language, with mathematical certainty, is attributable to but one being; and that being is the only living and true God.

The names "Jehovah," "I am," and "I am that I am," already proved to belong to Christ, are also the strongest expressions of original and eternal existence. The phrase, "I am," Christ in a peculiar manner applies to himself. John viii. 58. "And Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham

was, I am." John viii. 24. "If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins." Matt. xxviii. 20. "Lo, I am with you alway," &c. Here Christ does not say, "Before Abraham was I was;" or "I will be with you alway;" but "I am,"—teaching us explicitly that past and future are perfectly present to himself; and that his own existence is one present time.

2dly, Both by these names, and by other ascriptions of eternity to Christ, he is declared to be underived or self-existent.

He who is the First, he whose existence is one present time, necessarily exists only of himself.

3dly, Omnipotence is directly ascribed to Christ.

Rev. i. 8. "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, saith the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." In the 11th verse of this chapter, Christ utters these words of himself. Either, then, there are two persons who truly say those things, each of himself; or Christ declares them of himself in both these verses. The choice in this alternative I willingly leave to the Unitarians; for, either way, the great question in debate is determined with equal certainty. If Christ speaks the words in the 8th verse, he is the Almighty; if not, there are two persons who are "the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last."

4thly, Omniscience is also ascribed to Christ. John xxi. 17. "Peter saith unto him, Lord,

thou knowest all things." To this ascription of omniscience, Christ makes no reply; and therefore admits it in its full latitude. If it had not been true, it is impossible that he should have permitted Peter to continue in so dangerous an error.

5thly, Omnipresence is ascribed to Christ.

Matt. xviii. 20. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." This fact, the gathering together of persons in the name of Christ, has, from the times of the apostles, yearly existed in many thousands of places. Yet Christ, according to his own declaration, is in the midst of all these assemblies.

Matt. xxviii. 20. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Here Christ declares, that he is with the apostles, and succeeding ministers, alway, unto the end of the world. But ministers are, in a sense, scattered throughout the world. With all these, Christ has promised alway to be present.

6thly, Immutability is ascribed to Christ.

Hebrews xiii. 8. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

Psalms cii. 27, &c. quoted Hebrews i. 10, &c. "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest: yea, all of them shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy

years shall have no end." This passage is declared by St. Paul to be spoken of Christ, as I shall have occasion to shew more particularly hereafter ; and in both passages he is declared to possess absolute immutability. On this subject I argue in the following manner :

If Christ is unchangeable, he is so, either because his faculties are so immensely great, and his character so perfectly good, as to be incapable of change, either by increase or diminution ; or, if the supposition be possible, because he possesses a mind, which, having originally received all its ideas, is unable, by means of its singular constitution, either to lose any of those which it has received, or to receive any more ; and which, having originally possessed a certain degree of energy and moral worth, is, by its singular nature, also made incapable in both these respects of any alteration. No words are necessary to show, that every new idea makes a real change in the recipient ; and that therefore every intelligent creature changes of necessity every day, in the manner which we actually behold.

That Christ is not unchangeable, according to the latter of these suppositions, will, I suppose, be admitted without a debate. For though I have made the supposition, it is, I think, clearly inconsistent with the essential nature of an intelligent being. No such being, turning his mind to the objects by which thought is excited, can possibly fail of receiving new ideas. Besides, that Christ is not in

this manner unchangeable, is certain from Luke ii. 52. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." Here it is asserted, not only that he changed, when twelve years of age, but so perceptibly as to have the change distinctly marked by those around him.

Therefore, by necessary consequence, he concerning whom this attribute is asserted, is infinitely different in nature from the infant which was born of the Virgin Mary; and was united to that infant by a mysterious union so as to become one person, denominated, with strict propriety, by the one name Jesus Christ, or the anointed Saviour.

3. The peculiar actions of God are ascribed to Christ in the Scriptures.

On this subject I observe,

1st, That the creation of all things is ascribed to Christ.

John i. 3. "By him all things were made; and without him was not even one thing made which hath been made."

Col. i. 16. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him and for him."

2dly, The preservation of all things is also ascribed to Christ in the most explicit manner.

Col. i. 17. "By him (that is, Christ) do all things consist."

Heb. i. 1, 2. "God, who, at sundry times,

and in divers manners, spake unto our fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son ; whom he hath appointed heir of all things ; by whom also he made the worlds : who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power," &c.

On these passages it cannot be necessary to dwell. They plainly have but one meaning ; and that meaning is too explicit to admit even of an ingenious misconstruction. The words make it evident, if words can make it evident, that Christ is the upholder of all things.

3dly, The government of all things is, in the same direct and distinct manner, applied to Christ, Psalm xlv. 6. " Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."

The second Psalm, throughout, is an illustrious exhibition of the universal dominion of Christ.

The seventy-second Psalm is a still more glorious exhibition of the same subject. Here it is said, that " his dominion shall extend from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth ; that all kings shall bow down to him ; that all nations shall serve him : that they shall fear him as long as the sun and the moon endure : that his name shall endure, and be blessed, for ever : and that the whole earth shall be filled with his glory. Amen."

Psalm cx. 1. " The Lord said unto my Lord,

Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Psalm viii. 5. "Thou madest him a little (for a little time) lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour: thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands." See this passage applied to Christ, Heb. ii. 9.

4thly, The act of giving and restoring life is also expressly ascribed to Christ in a variety of ways.

Particularly while he resided in this world, he raised the dead at his pleasure. The daughter of Jairus, the son of the Widow of Nain, and his beloved Lazarus, were illustrious examples. All these returned again from the world of departed spirits at his command. "Damsel, I say unto thee, arise;" "Young man, I say unto thee, arise;" "Lazarus, come forth!" were the only means which he employed; and the spirit of these deceased persons instantly obeyed the call. This amazing power he accordingly asserts of himself in terms absolute and universal. "As the Father raiseth up and quickeneth, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will," John v. 22. "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself*." In the same manner St. Paul declares, 1 Cor. xv. 45. "The first Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was a quickening spirit." In a still

* See also Phil. iii. 21. and Col. iii. 4.

more striking manner did he exemplify this wonderful power in raising himself from the dead. That he did this cannot be doubted, unless we are disposed to doubt the truth of his own express declaration. John x. 17, 18. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it up again: no one taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again."

In this passage it is as evident as words can make it, that Christ laid down his life, of his own accord only, and of his own accord took it up again; and that no one was able to take it from him. Accordingly, St. Peter declares, Acts ii. 24. that "it was not possible for him to be holden of death."

Another most wonderful exhibition of this astonishing power will be made by him, as he himself has told us, in raising up of the dead at the last day. "And this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one who seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." John vi. 4.

5thly, The forgiveness of sin is expressly ascribed to Christ.

Colossians iii. 13. "Forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you."

The import of this passage will be sufficiently understood, if it can need any explanation, by reciting the parallel passage, Eph. iv. 32.

“ Forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ’s sake, hath forgiven you.”

Acts vii. 59, 60. “ And they stoned Stephen, invoking, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.”

In this affecting passage, Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost, and vouchsafed a vision of the glory of God, and of Jesus standing on the right hand of God, prays to Christ to forgive the sin of his murderers. Words, one would think, cannot be more decisive.

6thly, The act of giving eternal life is abundantly ascribed to Christ in the Scriptures.

John x. 27, 28. “ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me ; and I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish.”

Rev. xxi. 6. “ I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.”

7thly, To Christ is ascribed the great and awful act of judging the world, and of acquitting and condemning angels and men.

John v. 22. “ The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.” See also, what will preclude any further inquiry, the account of the last judgment, given by Christ himself, in the 25th chapter of Matthew.

All these are confessedly the acts of the infinite God alone ; and involve the absolute pos-

session of power and perfection without limits. To create, preserve, and govern the universe ; to give and restore life ; to forgive sin ; to bestow eternal life ; to judge the world of angels and men ; and to acquit, or condemn, finally, and for ever, all intelligent beings ; is, if any thing is, to be, and to act as being, the true God—the only, infinite, and eternal JEHOVAH.

In the great act of judging the world, particularly, the absolute exercise, and the most wonderful display ever made, of omniscience, as well as infinite justice, will be made. To judge righteously in this amazing case plainly requires the most exact and minute, as well as the most comprehensive and perfect, knowledge of all the thoughts, words, and actions, of intelligent beings ; together with all the aggravations and palliations of guilt, and all the enhancements and diminutions of virtue, which have existed in the universe. Consequently, whatever circumstances have attended these innumerable beings must be perfectly known, and actually present at once to the view of such a judge. Nor must he be less perfectly acquainted with the precise kinds and distribution of punishment and reward, which the respective works and characters of these numberless individuals, in their endlessly various circumstances, justly require.

To these things must be added, what Christ directly challenges to himself, the power of opening and shutting heaven and hell, or hades,

at his pleasure, and of conferring the happiness of heaven, and inflicting the miseries of hell on whom he pleases.

If then, Christ be not God, the real God has so ordered things in his providence, that the peculiar displays of divine perfection, the greatest which will ever be made, will be made by a creature, and not by himself. The creation, preservation, and government of the universe; the giving of life, and the restoration of it to the dead; the forgiveness of sin; the communication of endless life; and the final judgment of intelligent beings, are the highest, the most peculiar, and the most perfect displays of the Godhead. Omnipotence and infinite wisdom are pre-eminently manifested in the formation and government of all things; infinite benevolence, in the forgiveness and salvation of sinners; and omniscience and infinite justice, in acquitting and condemning, rewarding and punishing, the righteous and the wicked.

If, then, these, the most perfect displays of the Godhead, do not prove Christ to be the real and supreme God, let me ask, In what manner, and by what arguments, shall we prove that there is such a God?

4. That the relations which God sustains to his creatures are in the Scriptures ascribed to Christ.

1st, Christ sustains to the universe the relation of Creator.

The passages already quoted to shew that

the act of creating is ascribed to Christ, sufficiently prove this.

2dly, Christ sustains also the relation of preserver.

“By him all things consist.”

“Upholding all things by the word of his power.”

That God is the only preserver of the universe is unquestionably evident to the eye of reason ; and has accordingly been acknowledged by all men who have acknowledged a God. It is, also, in the most definite manner, declared in the Scriptures. In Nehemiah ix. 6. the Levites, at the head of the congregation, assembled for a solemn national fast, blessed God in these terms: “Thou, even thou, art Jehovah alone ; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts ; the earth, and all things that are therein ; the seas, and all that is therein ; and thou preservest them all : and the host of heaven worshippeth thee. Thou art Jehovah, the God who didst choose Abram, and brought him forth out of Ur, of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham.” In this passage it is declared in the most explicit terms, that he who preserves all things is the being worshipped by the host of heaven.

3dly, Christ sustains the character of the possessor of all things.

At his entrance into this world, it is said, “He came unto his own things, *τα ἴδια* ; and his own men, or kindred, (*οἱ ἰδιοί*,) received him

not ;" that is, he came into the world, but mankind, or the Jewish nation, received him not. John i. 11. "All things," saith Christ, "which the Father hath are mine, or my things." John xvi. 15. Again, in his intercessory prayer, he says to the Father, "All things that are mine are thine, and the things which are thine are mine." John xvii. 10. It will be needless to add any farther passages to texts so perfectly explicit and unambiguous as these.

4thly, Christ sustains the relation of supreme ruler to the universe.

1 Tim. vi. 15. "Which in his times the blessed and only potentate shall show, the KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS." Acts x. 36. "Jesus Christ: this person is Lord of all things." Romans ix. "Christ, who is over all things, God blessed for ever, Amen." Philip. ii. 10, 11. "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." In these passages Christ is directly exhibited as the Lord, or ruler, of the universe, in the most absolute sense; the Lord of all things, whom things in heaven, and things in earth, are respectively required to confess as their Lord.

In this character Christ, when he began to preach, expounded, altered, and annulled, the law of Moses, in his own name, and at his own pleasure. All the prophets who came before

him introduced their messages to mankind under the name and authority by which they spoke; prefacing them with "Thus saith the Lord;" "Thus saith Jehovah;" and "Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts." Christ, on the contrary, when altering and annulling these very things, uses no name but his own, and speaks directly by his own authority, introducing his own laws with "Verily, I say unto you;" plainly intended to be equivalent to "Thus saith the Lord;" because the things which were prefaced with this latter phrase were openly altered and revoked by him.

In this character, also, he disposes of the present and future allotments of all beings, opens and shuts, at his pleasure, the world of death, and departed spirits; and consigns whom he pleases to endless suffering, and bestows on whom he pleases immortal life. In this character, he is "the head of all principality and power," Col. ii. 10.—"Who having gone into heaven," saith St. Peter, "is on the right hand of God; angels, authorities, and powers, being subjected to him."

5. Christ is the last end of all things.

Colos. i. 16. "All things were created by him, and for him;" that is, they were all created for his use, that he might destine them to such purposes, and conduct them to such an issue, as were agreeable to his pleasure. In the same manner as it is said, Prov. xvi. 4. "Jehovah hath made all things for himself."

But all things are declared, in the passage

quoted from Colossians, to have been created by Christ for himself. Christ, therefore, in this act of making himself the end of the creation of all things, has declared that himself is, in his own view, the most important, great, and excellent of all things. This declaration is either true or false. If false, it proceeded from ignorance or from sin. It could not be from sin; for "Christ knew no sin;" and is declared to be "without spot or blemish;" "the Holy One and the Just;" even the "Holy One of God." It could not be from ignorance; because no intelligent creature who knew Jehovah at all, could possibly suppose himself to be more important, great, and excellent, than Jehovah; and because Christ will not be supposed, even by the Unitarians, to be capable of such ignorance. It is, therefore, true. But if it be true, it is, by inevitable consequence, also true, either that Christ is greater and more important than Jehovah, or that he is Jehovah himself.

It is with reference to this very subject, as I apprehend, that our Saviour, in his intercessory prayer, utters to the Father these remarkable words*: "All things which are mine, are thine; and all things which are thine, are mine: and I am glorified in them," John xvii. 10. Here, in two forms of expression, he declares to the Father the co-extension of the property which the Father and the Son have

* See the original Greek.

in the universe, and their mutual possession of all things; and then adds, that "he is glorified in," or by means of, "them all." This may be properly styled Christ's own comment on the declaration of St. Paul, that "all things were made for him;" that is, for his use, his glory; for here Christ declares his glory to be actually accomplished by them all.

This doctrine is plainly and utterly inconsistent with the Arian notion of Christ's being a subordinate God; to whom divine power is supposed to have been delegated, and who in this character of a delegate, is supposed to have created the universe, and to be worshipped. On this notion, I propose to make some observations hereafter. At present I shall only remark, that he who is the first cause, or Creator, and the last end of all things, is all that is or can be meant by the Supreme God. All things being made for his use, and being the means of his glory, there is nothing left to a being higher and greater than himself; nor does it appear that such being can have any material concern with the universe, in any manner whatever.

I shall now consider the fifth and last particular mentioned under this head: viz. That divine worship is in the Scriptures required, and by persons inspired was actually rendered, to Christ.

Divine worship is required to be rendered to Christ, John v. 22, 23. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judg-

ment unto the Son: that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father that sent him." In this passage of Scripture we are informed, that the infinite prerogative of judging the universe is committed by the Father to the Son; for this, as at least one, if not the only great end, "that all (that is, I apprehend, all intelligent creatures, the word men not being in the original) should honour the Son even as (that is, just in the same manner as, and in the same degree as) they honour the Father." The final judgment, being an act which eminently displays the infinite perfections, is committed to the Son, that he may be perceived with indubitable evidence to possess these perfections, and may therefore receive that peculiar honour which is due to Him only by whom they are possessed. The honour which is due in a peculiar sense to God consists supremely in religious worship, in making him the object of our supreme affection; and rendering to him our supreme obedience. All this is here required to Christ, in the same manner in which it is required to the Father.

In the same manner is this worship commanded to both men and angels. Phil. ii. 9—11. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that

every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." In this passage, all things celestial, terrestrial, and subterranean, (as it is in the original,) are required to bow the knee to Christ, and to confess him to be Lord. To bow the knee is well known appropriate phraseology to denote religious worship. "I have left me," says God to Elijah, "seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him," 1 Kings xix. 18 *. St. Paul also says, "I bow my knees to the Father of all mercies." But to place it beyond all doubt, we need only refer to Isa. xlv. 22, 23. when this passage is quoted: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. By myself have I sworn, and the truth is gone out of my mouth; the word, and it shall not be revoked. Surely to me shall every knee bow, shall every tongue swear: saying, Only to Jehovah belongeth salvation and power †." To ascribe to Jehovah salvation and power (the thing which, the apostle informs us, is the same with confessing that Christ is Lord,) and to bow the knee when making this ascription, is undoubtedly religious worship, if any thing is. Accordingly, this ascription is often made by the saints in the Scriptures, and the saints and angels in heaven.

* See Hos. xiii. 2; and Psalm ii. 2. † Lowth.

In Isa. vi. the seraphim worshipped Christ, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of Hosts." This passage has been formerly noticed, let it be compared with John xii.

Again, Stephen, in Acts vii. 59, 60, prayed to Christ. "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God;" or as in the original, "they stoned Stephen, invoking, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge; and, having said this, he fell asleep."

On this prayer of St. Stephen I make the following remarks:—

(1.) Stephen at this time was "full of the Holy Ghost," (verse 55.) and, therefore, perfectly secured from error.

(2.) He was singularly favoured of God on account of the greatness of his faith and obedience; and, as a peculiar testimony of the divine favour, he was permitted to "see the heavens opened, and to behold the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God."

(3.) In the full assurance produced by this vision, and the faith with which he beheld it, he presented his final petitions to Christ.

(4.) The first of these petitions respected the highest personal object which can be prayed for, viz. the eternal salvation of his soul; and attributed to Him, to whom it was made, that infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, which alone can bestow salvation.

(5.) The second petition was of the same nature, being a prayer, that his enemies might not be finally condemned for the sin of murdering him; and of course attributed to the person, to whom it was addressed, the power of forgiving or condemning these murderers. No higher act of worship was ever rendered than this, nor was any act of worship ever performed on a more solemn occasion, nor by a person better qualified to worship aright, nor with a more illustrious testimony of acceptance. Yet this act of worship was performed to Christ.

(6.) This was the very worship, and these were the very prayers, offered to God, a little before, by Christ at his crucifixion. Stephen, therefore, worshipped Christ just as Christ worshipped the Father.

Farther, The baptismal service, directed by Christ himself, is an act of religious worship to Christ.

“Baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Whether this be interpreted to mean, baptizing them into the name, or in the name, it makes no difference. If Christians are baptized into the name, they are baptized into the name of God only; for they are the children of God only by adoption; that adoption by which they take his name upon them; and Christ is here declared to be the God whose name they assume. If they are baptized in the name, they are baptized in the name, or authority, of God only: but Christ is this God.

Again, The blessing pronounced on Christian assemblies, is an act of religious worship, rendered to Christ.

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.” “Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ,” Eph. vi. 23. Or, as it was more commonly, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.” The first of these is equivalent to the blessing anciently pronounced by the high-priest on the children of Israel. “Jehovah bless thee, and keep thee: Jehovah make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious to thee: Jehovah lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” It is the appropriate office of the Father to bless and preserve; of the Son to give grace and illumination; and of the Spirit to communicate peace.

Finally, So universal was the custom of praying to Christ, that Christians were originally entitled, as their distinguishing appellation, “Those who called on the name of Christ.” Thus, Ananias says to Christ, Acts ix. 14. “Here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all those that call on thy name.” The people of Damascus, also, when they heard Paul preach, “were amazed, and said, Is not this he who destroyed them that called on this name in Jerusalem?” 1 Cor. i. 1. “Paul, called to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and

Sosthenes, the brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." 2 Tim. ii. 22. "Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." Rom. x. 12. "The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." That Christ is here meant, is evident from the preceding verse.

In all these instances, and in this universal manner, was Christ worshipped. In the greater part of the instances, the persons who rendered the worship were inspired; and, in the remaining instances, were plainly under divine direction; because the worship was approved and accepted.

But religious worship is lawfully rendered to God only. This we know from the mouth of Christ himself quoting Deut. x. 20; in Matt. x. 12. it is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." The Angel also forbade John to worship him; saying, "See thou do it not; worship God." Isaiah also commands, "Sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself; and let him be your fear and your dread. God, also, in Exodus xxxiv. 14. says to the Israelites, "Thou shalt worship no other god: for JEHOVAH, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God."

Yet Christ is here directed to be worshipped, and is actually worshipped, by person inspired. If, then, Christ be not God, God has command-

ed another to be worshipped ; and persons, under the immediate direction of his Spirit, have worshipped another.

The whole Church, the bride, is commanded, in Psalm xlv. by that God who said unto him, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;" thus, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear ; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty ; for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him." The church has in all ages obeyed this command, and worshipped him. Prophets have worshipped him. Apostles have worshipped him. Men, full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost, have besought his guidance, aid, grace, and blessing, while they lived ; and, when they died, have besought him to receive their spirits into his own eternal kingdom. If Christ is God ; if he is JEHOVAH ; they have done their duty. If he is not God ; if he is not JEHOVAH ; they have violated through life, and in death, the first of JEHOVAH's commands in the Decalogue, "Thou shalt have no other God before me."

II. That the Deity of Christ is the only ground of consistency in the scheme of redemption.

The truth of this assertion I shall attempt to evince, by showing, that the Deity of Christ is the only ground of consistency in the things spoken of him.

This observation I, in the first place, observe, is strikingly applicable to the scriptural exhibitions given of him as the propitiation for sin.

In the discussion of this point, I shall omit every thing concerning this subject which is not necessary to the doctrine just now declared.

That Christ is in some sense a propitiation for the sins of the world cannot be denied, unless by a direct denial of the express words, as well as the unquestionable doctrines of the Gospel. 1 John ii. 2. "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." 1 John iv. 10. "He loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." See also Rom. iii. 25; Isa. liii. 10, &c. The text also is a direct declaration of this doctrine. "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and of a sin-offering, or an offering for sin," &c.

By Christ being a propitiation for sin, it is here necessary to mean only that something, which being done for the sinner, the sinner may be forgiven and restored; but which not being done, he must be punished according to the sentence of the law by which he is condemned. That so much as is here specified, is included in Christ's being the propitiation for the sins of mankind, is unquestionably evident.

First, From the name by which it is called in the Scriptures in many instances, viz.

απολυτρωσις, translated redemption. When a person was taken captive in war, and condemned to perpetual slavery or to death, a sum of money was not unfrequently paid and accepted for his ransom from these evils; this sum was called *λυτρον*; and the redemption of the captive from death or slavery, was called *απολυτρωσις*. The redemption of mankind from the slavery of sin, and the everlasting death to which the sinner was exposed by it, is called by the same name. The *λυτρον*, or price of redemption, was paid, not by the captive, but by another person. The price of Man's Redemption, in like manner, was not paid by himself, but by Christ: that is, Christ accomplished something, without which man would not have been redeemed from the bondage of death and sin.

Secondly, This truth is evident from Isaiah liii. 10. "Yet it pleased JEHOVAH to crush him with affliction. If his soul shall make a propitiatory sacrifice; he shall see a seed, which shall prolong their days; and the gracious purpose of JEHOVAH shall prosper in his hands. Of the travail of his soul he shall see (the fruit) and be satisfied: by the knowledge of him shall my righteous servant justify many; for the punishment of their iniquities he shall bear. Therefore I will distribute to him the many for his portion; and the mighty people shall he share for his spoil: because he poured out his soul unto death; was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of

many; and made intercession for the transgressors *."

In this passage it is clear, that in the covenant of redemption, here recited, JEHOVAH promised to Christ, "the seed which should prolong their days," or be eternally blessed, a promise here repeated in many forms, on the condition that "he made his soul a propitiatory sacrifice for sin." It is, therefore, certain, that if he had not made this sacrifice, he would not have received this reward; or, in other words, mankind would not have been saved.

Thirdly, The same truth is evident from Rom. iii. 25, 26, "Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation for sin, to declare his righteousness in the remission of sins that are past; that he might be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

From this passage it is evident, that if God had not set forth Christ as a propitiation, his righteousness in the remission of sins that are past would not have been declared; and that he would not have been just in the act of justifying believers. In other words, if Christ had not become a propitiation, the sins of mankind could not have been remitted, nor themselves justified.

In a former Discourse it has, I trust, been proved that, in the literal sense, "by works of law no flesh can be justified before God;" and that the future obedience and the repent-

ance of the sinner are alike and wholly un-availing to this end. Independently of Christ's redemption, therefore, or independently of his being "the propitiation for the sins of men, every sinner is condemned, lost, and without hope. The Scriptures, in multiplied instances, teach us that Christ became a propitiation for sin, especially by his death. Isa. liii. 5, "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him." Rom. v. 6, "In due time Christ died for the ungodly." 1 Cor. xv. 3, "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." 2 Cor. v. 14, "One died for all." 1 Thess. v. 10, "Who died for us, that we should live with him." Col. i. 20, "Having made peace through the blood of his cross." 1 John i. 7, "The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin." 1 Pet. i. 18, 19, "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ." Rev. v. 9, "Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." More proofs of this point cannot be necessary. Let me now ask, if Christ be not in the strictest sense God, how is it possible that he should become in this, or any other manner, a propitiation for the sins of mankind? If Christ be merely a man, or in any other sense a mere creature, how is it possible that he should be able to perform any act which would not be absolutely necessary for his own justification before God? The law, by which every creature is governed, requires him to "love

God with all the heart, soul, strength, and understanding;" or in other words, to consecrate all his powers supremely and absolutely, so long as he exists, to the service of God. More than this he cannot do; and if all this be not done he is a sinner, and cannot be justified. How then can it be possible for him to perform any thing which can be accepted on the behalf of another? It is impossible that any service should be accepted for another which is entirely due for one's self. It is impossible that the debt due from another should be cancelled by my payment of money due for a debt of my own. When I have paid my own debts, if I can offer more money, I may then satisfy the creditor for the debt of another. The obedience which the law requires of me as my obedience, will satisfy the demands of the law on me, and prove the means of my justification; but cannot be transferred from me to another subject of the same law, so as to answer the demands of the law on him. The law demands all his obedience of him, and all mine of me; but mine only being rendered, the demands of the law are not and cannot be satisfied.

Supererogatory service, or service not required by law, is absolutely necessary to the very existence of all vicarious interference. But no creature can possibly perform supererogatory service; because all that he can do is required of him by the law. Thus "exceeding broad," in the scriptural language,

“is the commandment;” and thus it is impossible that any creature should become, in any sense, a propitiation for the sins of mankind.

According to the Socinian scheme, Christ came into the world, or was born, merely to be a prophet and example of righteousness, or a teacher of the will of God to mankind, and died only to bear witness to the truth of his precepts. In the same manner Moses, and all the succeeding prophets, came into the world to be teachers and examples of truth and righteousness; and, in the same manner, Peter and Paul, both the Jameses, and almost all the other apostles, together with Stephen, and a host of martyrs who followed him, bore witness to the truth of the precepts which they taught, by voluntarily yielding themselves to death. All these persons taught the truth of God, and practised righteousness; and a multitude of them sealed their testimony with their blood. The only difference, according to the Socinian scheme, between Christ and them is, that he was wiser and better than they. Paul, however, taught more of the gospel than Christ himself, and both Paul and Peter sealed the truth of their testimony on the cross. Of what consequence, then, was the death of Christ to mankind, any more than that of Zechariah, Jeremiah, James, Peter, or Paul? Each of these men died as a witness to the truth. But why, on these principles, did Christ say, “he came to give his life a ransom for many?” and why did Paul

say, "Christ gave himself a ransom for all?" Could these things be said of Moses, or Jeremiah, or Peter, or James, or Paul? Are we justified by the grace of God through the redemption which is in Moses? Did Paul make peace by the blood of his cross? Was Peter a propitiation, an *ἱλασμος*, the means of appeasing the anger of God, of reconciling him to us, and rendering him propitiatory to sinners?

I shall now proceed,

III. To show, That the Jews, according to the Unitarian doctrine, are unjustly charged with guilt in putting Christ to death.

The law of God, as given by Moses, required the blasphemer to be stoned. Christ, in his conversation with the Jews, recorded John v. declared himself to be the Son of God. By this phrase the Jews, as I mentioned in a former Discourse, understood him to declare that himself was God, or equal with God. Their own construction they declared to him, "For a good work we stone thee not; but because thou, being a man, makest thyself God." John x. 33. St. John also, as I then observed, understood the phrase in the same manner. "Therefore," he says, "the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his father, making himself equal with God." This is the apostle's own construction of Christ's averment, and is plainly alleged by him as being that of the Jews also.

When Christ was brought before the San-

hedrim, after several vain attempts to convict him of any crime, the high-priest "adjured him," that is, put him upon oath, "to tell him whether he was the Christ, the Son of the blessed God." In answer to this question, thus solemnly put, Christ said, "I am;" and, as a proof that he said this truly, added, "And ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." In reply to this declaration, "the high-priest rent his clothes," and declaring all farther testimony needless, pronounced him guilty of blasphemy for this saying; in consequence of which, the evangelists inform us, they all condemned him to death.

Now, it is evident, that Christ was understood by the Jews to declare that he was equal to God, and was God, by asserting himself to be the Son of God. Of this there cannot be a doubt, because it is asserted both by the Jews themselves, and by the evangelist. If, then, Christ was a man merely, he was, for aught that I can see, truly a blasphemer. For when he declared himself to be God, or equal with God, he plainly declared God to be neither greater, wiser, nor better than himself. But to assert, in any form of words, that the infinite Jehovah is of the same character with a man, and possessed of no more greatness, excellency, or glory, than that which is human, would be acknowledged in any other case to be blasphemy, because it would be a denial of all the perfections of God, and an ascription to him of all

the frailties of man. If this be not blasphemy, what can be?

But if Christ was a blasphemer, he was justly put to death. The law, which he, as well as the Jews, acknowledged to have been given by God himself, required the blasphemer to be stoned: as a blasphemer, therefore, he was, according to the requisitions of a divine, and therefore a just law, deservedly condemned to death.

Thus, according to this scheme, the Jews, instead of being guilty in putting Christ to death, acted meritoriously, for they only obeyed the divine law.

But it will be said, Christ did not intend by this declaration to assert that he was God; nor that he was equal with God. This, indeed, is said, and must be said, by the abettors of the Unitarian schemes. I answer; it is clear that the Jews thus understood him, and that he knew them thus to understand him. They had formerly attempted to stone him for using the same language; and had then told him, in express terms, the manner in which they construed the phrase. The Sanhedrim, also, sufficiently explained to him their own views of it by pronouncing it blasphemy. In consequence of this mode of understanding the phrase, he saw them now about to imbrue their hands in his blood. If it was a mistake on their part, he was bound to remove it. He was bound not to suffer his own character to be stained in their view with the crime of blasphemy. He was bound to use language as he knew it would

be understood. He was bound not to lose his own life, nor suffer them to incur the guilt of taking it away, merely through a mistake of theirs. If, then, they are supposed in this case to have sinned at all; they sinned only through a mistake, which Christ himself voluntarily created, and voluntarily declined to remove. The sin, therefore, so far as I can see, lies, on this supposition, primarily at his door. What, then, shall we say of the solemn and awful charge brought against the Jews by St. Peter? "Him ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain?" What shall we say of the whole body of Scriptural representations on this subject? What shall we say of the terrible destruction of their nation; of their judicial blindness; and of all the calamities which have befallen them, as monuments of the divine indignation, for more than seventeen hundred years?

IV. The prophets and apostles, according to the same doctrine, cannot be vindicated from leading mankind into the sin of idolatry.

The prophets and apostles have, in a great variety of places, called Christ God, the true God, the great God, the mighty God, JEHOVAH, and I AM. They have declared him to be eternal, self-existent, incomprehensible, almighty, omnipresent, omniscient, and immutable. They have attributed to him the creation, preservation, and government of all things; and the acts of giving life, forgiving sin, judg-

ing the world, and rewarding both the righteous and the wicked. They have ascribed to him the infinite relations of Creator, Preserver, Possessor, Ruler, and Final Cause, of all things. Beyond this, they have on many occasions worshipped him themselves: and have taught us, that God requires him to be worshipped, and that he is in fact worshipped, by saints and angels in earth and heaven. They have also exhibited Christ, when on earth, as challenging these things to himself, and as receiving them from others without reprobation or censure. They have further declared him to be the only Saviour of the world: a character evidently demanding infinite attributes; and, according to their account, challenged by JEHOVAH as exclusively his own.

Now let me ask, Whether all these things are not a complete exhibition of Christ, as the proper object of religious worship? But the apostles have directly and fully declared all these things. If, then, Christ is not God, have they not clearly so represented him, as to persuade mankind that he is God, and that he is to be worshipped?

How is it possible that their readers, and especially the plain men, who constitute ninety-nine hundredths of them—how is it possible that any men, acknowledging the apostles to have used language as other men use it, and so as to be understood by those for whom they wrote, (an admission absolutely necessary to exculpate them from plain fraud,) should dis-

tinguish between a person thus described, and the Being who alone is the proper object of worship? What can their minds—what can any mind add to this exhibition, to make such a Being more great, awful, lovely, glorious, and godlike? Do not these things include all which we can conceive to be included in infinite perfection? Has any thing superior to these been ever published to mankind? Has any thing been published in any other instance which can be compared with these?

But if Christ be not truly God, he cannot be worshipped without idolatry. He himself says, and recites it as the command of God, “Thou shalt worship JEHOVAH, thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” Can inspired men, then, writing a revelation, the great end of which was to inculcate the Unity of God; the existence of but one God; and the supreme obligation, incumbent on all men, to worship him only—can such men have been directed by the Spirit of God so to write as they have actually written? Could they, being Jews, with the Old Testament in their hands, have so written, even of themselves, as naturally, not to say necessarily, to lead all their followers into the sin of idolatry? That they have so written as naturally to produce this consequence, if Christ be not God, is unquestionable: because the great body of their followers have actually understood them to assert the Deity of Christ, and have actually worshipped him. The Scriptures, therefore, written for the professed pur-

pose of preventing idolatry, have, according to the scheme of my opponents, been the direct cause of promoting and establishing it among almost all those who have believed them to be the word of God.

Can all, or any of the things which I have asserted concerning Christ from the Scriptures be true of a man—or of any created being? Can a man—can an angel be the first cause, or last end, the preserver, proprietor, possessor, and ruler of all things? Can a creature be the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person; the light of the world, the propitiation for sin, the saviour of mankind, or the object of religious worship? Can any religious man, on a death-bed, say, "Gabriel, receive my spirit?" or "Lay not the sin of my murderers to their charge?" Can Gabriel give life, raise the dead, or bestow immortal life? Can he judge the world, reward the righteous and the wicked, or be the glory, light, and temple of heaven? What would be the impression, were a minister of the Gospel to say, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of Gabriel, and of the Holy Ghost? or The grace of Gabriel, the love of God, the Father, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen? Would not these things beyond measure shock the minds of a Christian assembly, as the most palpable blasphemy? Was there ever a minister, even an Arian, or a Socinian, who would bring himself thus to speak in such an assembly? Would

not this be, not merely comparing, or likening, one of the angels to JEHOVAH, but placing him on the same level? Yet these things are said of Christ.

Why are they said of him, if his nature be like that of Gabriel? Why are they seemingly said? Was it not perfectly easy for the omniscient God to have said, if he chose to say it, that Christ was a mere man, or a mere creature? and so to have said this, that it would not have been misunderstood even by the plainest man? Did he not understand language sufficiently? Has it not been said in such a manner, as to be intelligible to all men, by Arius, Socinus, Zuicker, Price, Priestley, Belsham, and many others? Did any man ever mistrust, that they have not said it? Was not JEHOVAH more interested to say it, if it is true, than they were? and so to say it, as to be easily, generally, and certainly understood? Was he not more able? Did he not foresee all the doubts, difficulties, errors, misconstructions, and consequent sins and idolatries, if they have indeed been misconstructions and idolatries, arising from unhappy language used in the Scriptures? Have not the prophets, who “spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;”—have not the apostles, who “spake the things freely given to them of God, not in the words which man’s wisdom taught, but which the Holy Ghost taught,”—expressed the mind of God on this subject, and every other, in the very manner chosen by

God himself? Has not his infinite faithfulness and mercy, then, sufficiently guarded every honest mind against this erroneous sin?

But if Christ be not the true God, the great body of Christians have, in every age of the church, wholly misunderstood the Scriptures concerning this most important doctrine, and mistaken infinitely the real character of their Saviour. Of course the Scriptures have been so written, as that the natural interpretation of them is a source of total and dreadful error; even of that which they themselves denounce in terms of the highest reprobation, viz. idolatry. For the interpretation which has been given them by the great body of Christians, in every age and country in which they have existed, is beyond a controversy the natural interpretation. That men, who first make a philosophical system of religion, and then endeavour to reconcile the Scriptures to it, should understand them falsely, cannot be wondered at; but that they should be falsely understood by the great body of mankind, who, for their religion, come to them only; and yet the “way of holiness be still a highway, in which wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err,”—is a position which is yet to be explained.

PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

ANOTHER important branch of the Socinian doctrine, is that which relates to the personality of the Holy Spirit. My views on this subject, says Dr. Dwight, will be sufficiently expressed in this position :—

The Holy Ghost is a Divine Person.

It is well known to those who hear me, that various classes of men who profess to receive the Bible as the rule of their faith, have denied this proposition, viz. those who deny the Deity of our Saviour. The scheme of denial, however, has, in this case, been materially different from that in the other. In that, Deity was the object denied ; in this, Personality. On all hands, it is agreed that the Holy Ghost is acknowledged by Trinitarians to be a Divine Person ; but by Unitarians only a Divine attribute ; asserted sometimes to be the wisdom, but usually the power of God. The

chief subject of debate, therefore, between us and the Unitarians, that is, those with whom we have the chief concern, viz. the Arians and Socinians, is, whether the Holy Ghost be a person or an attribute. In support of the Trinitarian doctrine concerning this subject, I observe,

1st, The supposition that the Spirit of God is an attribute, renders the language of the Scriptures unintelligible and unmeaning.

I have had occasion to take some notice of this fact formerly : it will be proper, however, to bring it up to view at this time. For example, then, it is said in Acts x. 38. " God anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost and with power." This passage, read according to its real meaning, as interpreted by the Unitarians, would stand thus, " God anointed Jesus with the holy power of God, and with power." Rom. xv. 13. " Now the God of peace fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost ;" that is, " that ye may abound in hope through the power of the holy power of God." Verse 19. " Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God ;" that is, " mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the power of God." 1 Cor. ii. 4. " In demonstration of the Spirit and of power ;" that is, " in demonstration of power, and of power."

I will not intrude upon your patience by repeating similar passages any farther, as these

are abundantly sufficient for my purpose. It cannot be necessary to bring proofs, that the infinitely wise God can never have directed his own word to be written in this manner. No sober man ever wrote in this manner. Nay, it may be confidently asserted, that such a mode of writing was never adopted by any man of any character whatever.

2dly, This scheme renders our Saviour's account of the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost unmeaning and incredible.

This account is given us in various places, particularly Matt. xii. 31. "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." Concerning this I observe,

First, That blasphemy cannot be directed against an attribute. Evil speaking, or speaking in a manner derogatory to character, can be directed only against a percipient being; because such a being only is capable of perceiving, or being in any way affected by the evil intended. When mankind speak evil against the word, Sabbaths, ordinances, works, names, or titles of God, the evil is nothing, except as it is directed against God himself; because he alone, and not the things immediately blasphemed, can perceive, or be affected with, the evil which is spoken. In this manner all men have understood the subject.

It cannot be, therefore, that the Unitarians, when they read this passage, suppose the

blasphemy in question to be directed against the power of God. They undoubtedly consider it as directed against God himself, through the medium of this attribute. I observe, therefore,

Secondly, It is inconceivable, that blasphemy against God universally, and in all other forms, should be forgiven, while the blasphemy against his power can never be forgiven.

In the attribute of power, there is plainly nothing which is peculiarly sacred. It is shared alike by good and evil beings; and does not contribute at all to distinguish their character, as moral beings, or to render them either good or evil. It is, in no sense, the foundation, nor an ingredient, of worth or moral excellence. It is not, and cannot be, the object of love nor praise. It is therefore incredible, and certainly inexplicable, that "all manner of blasphemy" against the whole character of God, particularly against his moral character, "should be forgiven," and yet that blasphemy against this single natural attribute should never be forgiven. So far as the human understanding can discern, blasphemy against the holiness, faithfulness, truth, goodness, and mercy of God, would be more expressive of malignant opposition and of guilt in the blasphemer, than blasphemy merely against his power. St. John has declared that "God is love." That is, love is the essence, sum, and glory, of his moral character, and of himself. Blasphemy against this perfection,

we should, I think, irresistibly conclude to be more heinous, than against any other attribute. But, according to this scheme, blasphemy against the power of God, a natural attribute, is so much more heinous than that which is directed against all the other divine attributes, nay, than that which is directed against God himself, and his whole character, including this very attribute of power, together with all others, as to be absolutely unpardonable, while all other blasphemy can, and will, be forgiven. This, to say the least, is incredible.

If the Holy Ghost be a Divine Person, it would seem probable, that, if any sin is incapable of being forgiven, blasphemy against the Holy Ghost would be that sin. The Holy Ghost is God, employed in his most benevolent and wonderful work,—that of restoring holiness to the soul of man,—in his most glorious character, that of the sanctifier,—in a work, demanding the supreme gratitude of mankind,—in a character, demanding their supreme reverence and love.

3dly, That the Holy Ghost is not an attribute, is evident from Acts v. 3. “But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart, to lie unto the Holy Ghost?”

A lie is a wilful deception, and can be told only to intelligent beings; because such beings only can perceive the meaning of the declaration with which the liar intends to deceive; or, in other words, because such beings only can receive the lie at his mouth. A child

perfectly knows that he cannot lie to a tree or an ox, because they must be unconscious of what he says. But an attribute is as unconscious as a tree or an ox; and although God perceives all things, yet his power perceives nothing. A lie therefore cannot, in the physical sense of possibility, be told to the power of God.

4thly, All the attributes and actions of a person are ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

These are so numerous, and the varieties in which they are mentioned are so numerous also, that I shall only specify them in the most summary manner.

The Spirit of God is said to strive.—“My Spirit shall not always strive with man,” Gen. vi. 3.

To be sent forth.—“Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, and they are created,” Psalm civ. 30. “God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son,” Gal. iv. 6. “The Comforter, whom I will send unto you from the Father,” John xv. 26.

To move.—“The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters,” Gen. i. 2.

To know.—“The Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is within him? Even so the things of God knoweth no one, but the Spirit of God,” 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

Here let me ask, whether any man can conceive that knowledge, one essential attribute

of God, can with any meaning be said to be an attribute of power, which is another? Or whether power can, in any words that have meaning, be said to know any thing?

The Spirit of God is said to speak.—“He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak,” John xvi. 13.

“Then the Spirit said to Peter,” Acts x. 19.

“The Spirit said to Philip,” Acts viii. 20.

“Let him that hath an ear hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches,” Rev. ii. 7.

“The Spirit and the bride say, Come,” Rev. xxii. 17.

To guide.—“He will guide you into all the truth,” John xvi. 13.

To lead.—“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God,” Rom. viii. 14.

To help.—“The Spirit helpeth our infirmities,” Rom. viii. 26.

To testify.—“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God,” Rom. viii. 16. “But when the Comforter is come, even the Spirit of truth, he shall testify of me,” John xv. 26.

To reveal.—“As it is now revealed unto his holy prophets and apostles by the Spirit,” Eph. iii. 5. “But the Comforter shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you,” John xiv. 26.

To search.—“The Spirit searcheth all things,” 1 Cor. ii. 10.

To have a mind, or pleasure.—“He that

searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit," Rom. viii. 27.

To prophecy.—"He shall show you things to come," John xvi. 13. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith," 1 Tim. iv. 1.

To intercede.—"The Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered," Rom. viii. 26.

To give gifts.—"For to one is given by his Spirit the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge; to another, faith; to another, the gifts of healing; to another, the working of miracles," &c. 1 Cor. xii. 8—10.

To work in the soul of man.—"All these worketh one and the same Spirit, dividing to every man as he will," 1 Cor. xii. 11.

To work miracles.—"Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God," Rom. xv. 19.

To sanctify.—"Ye are sanctified by the Spirit of our God," 1 Cor. vi. 11.

To quicken, or give life.—"It is the Spirit that quickeneth," John vi. 63. "Put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." This is spoken of Christ, 1 Pet. iii. 18.

To be pleased.—"It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us," Acts xv. 28.

To be vexed.—"They rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit," Isa. lxiii. 10.

To be provoked, to be resisted, and to be grieved.

That all these things should be said of an

attribute, particularly of the attribute of power, will, I believe, be acknowledged to be incredible. That they should be dictated by God himself, and be the common language in which this attribute, or any attribute, is described in his word, is, I think, impossible. The language of the Scriptures is in all other cases, except those in which it involves the Deity of the Son and the Spirit, the language of common sense, the plain, artless language of nature. Why should it not be so here? Why should these two cases be, uniformly and solely, exceptions to that law by which all the remaining language of Scripture is governed? Why should the Scriptural writers, whenever these subjects come before them, and then only, desert their native style, that which alone they use on all other occasions, and adopt one totally new and singular? Why should this be done by any writer? Such a case, it is presumed, cannot be found in the world, except in these two instances. Why should it be found in so many of these writers? Why should it be found in every scriptural writer? Why, above all, should it be found in the language of Christ himself? Still more: whence could these writers be induced to depart from their customary style whenever they had occasion to speak of these two subjects, and adopt such language as renders their real meaning obscure, and not only obscure, but unintelligible; and not only unintelligible, but so utterly lost in the strangeness of their phraseology, that al-

most all their readers, and among them the great body of the wisest and best, have totally mistaken the real meaning, and derived from this very phraseology a meaning infinitely different? Can this be supposed to have been accomplished by the immediate providence of God himself, when disclosing his will to mankind concerning subjects of infinite importance? Yet the Unitarians must suppose all this, or give up their scheme.

5thly, The Holy Ghost is a Divine Person.

There will probably be little dispute concerning this declaration among those who acknowledge that the Holy Ghost is a person. The things which are said concerning the Spirit of God are so plainly such as evince infinite perfection, that few persons, probably none, who admit the personality of the Spirit, will deny his Deity. Still, it will be useful on this occasion to exhibit several proofs of this truth.

(1.) The names of God are given to the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures. "Now the Lord is that Spirit," 2 Cor. viii. 17. This is a direct affirmation of St. Paul, that the Spirit is God.

For who hath known the mind of the Lord? and who has been his Counsellor?" Rom. xi. 34. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him?" 1 Cor. ii. 16. Both these passages are quoted from Isaiah xl. 13, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the

Lord? or, being his Counsellor, hath taught him?"

"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ," 2 Thess. iii. 5. Here the person addressed in prayer, is plainly a distinct person from those mentioned by the names God and Christ, and of course is the Spirit of God; to whom throughout the Scriptures the office of directing the hearts of Christians to their duty, is every where ascribed.

Peter says to Ananias, Acts v. 3, 4. "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost? Why hast thou conceived this in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Here the Holy Ghost is called God by the apostle, in as direct terms as are conceivable.

Acts iv. 24, 25, "They lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, who hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is. Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?"

Acts i. 16, Peter says, "This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of David." The Holy Ghost is, therefore, the Lord God who spoke by the mouth of David.

(2.) The attributes of God are ascribed to the Holy Ghost.

Eternity.—"Christ, who through the eter-

nal Spirit once offered himself to God," Heb. ix. 14.

Omnipresence.—"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Whither shall I flee from thy presence?" Psalm cxxxix. 7. "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost;" that is, the bodies of all Christians, 1 Cor. vi. 9.

Omniscience.—"The Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God," 1 Cor. ii. 10. "Even so, the things of God knoweth no one, but the Spirit of God," 1 Cor. ii. 11.

Holiness.—"The Holy Ghost," "the Holy Spirit;" "the Spirit of Holiness."

Grace.—"Hath done despite to the Spirit of grace," Heb. x. 29; see also Zech. xii. 10.

Truth.—"The Comforter, the Spirit of truth," John xiv. 17.

Glory.—"The Spirit of glory and of God resteth on you," 1 Pet. iv. 14.

Goodness.—"Thy good Spirit," Neh. ix. 20. "Thy Spirit is good," Psalm cxliii. 10.

Power.—"The power of God," as exerted in working signs and wonders, is ascribed to the Holy Ghost throughout the New Testament.

(3.) The actions of God are ascribed to the Holy Ghost.

Creation.—"By his Spirit he garnished the heavens," Job xxvi. 13. "The Spirit of God hath made me," Job xxxiii. 4; see also Acts i. 24, 25, compared with Acts i. 16.

Working miracles, which, as you know, is either a suspension or counteraction of the laws

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of nature, or of the divine agency operating conformably to those laws, and is, therefore, with peculiar evidence, an act of God himself. This, as I have already remarked concerning the power exerted in it, is throughout the New Testament ascribed to the Holy Ghost.

Inspiration.—“Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,” 2 Pet. i. 21.

Giving life.—“It is the Spirit that quickeneth,” John vi. 63. “Put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit,” 1 Pet. iii. 18. “He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you,” Rom. viii. 11.

Sanctification.—This also is ascribed to the Holy Ghost appropriately, throughout the New Testament.

Instances of the same general nature might be easily increased in numbers, and the proofs might be easily multiplied to a great extent; but as discourses so extensively made up of detached passages of Scripture, are apt to be less interesting than could be wished, I shall desist.

(4.) The Holy Ghost is a divine person, because he is united with the Father and the Son in the baptismal service, and in the blessing pronounced upon Christians by St. Paul.

I have mentioned these subjects together, because they have some things in common. Yet there are also some things in which they differ. “Go and teach all nations,” said our Saviour to his apostles, “baptizing them in the

name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," says St. Paul to the Corinthian church, and through them to all Christians, "and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen."

In the commission here given by Christ to his apostles, it is impossible that an attribute should with propriety or meaning be joined with persons, or a creature with one or more divine persons. No absurdity can strike the mind with more force, than that Christ should direct the apostles to baptize in the name of God the Father, and of the Son, and of the *divine* power! Nothing but impiety can, so far as I see, be contained in a direction to baptize in the name of God and of the creature. What creature would dare to associate himself with God in such an act of authority, and thus presume to ascend the throne of his Maker? The same things are equally true concerning the form of blessing above recited. Can St. Paul be supposed to have united either a creature or an attribute with the eternal God in this solemn service? What blessings could either of these bestow? Both the creature and the attribute, considered by themselves, are in this view nothing.

But this form of blessing is a prayer, and is addressed equally to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Can St. Paul have addressed a prayer either to an attribute or to a creature?

Farther: The blessing prayed for from the Holy Ghost is communion or fellowship. The request for this blessing involves therefore the declaration, that the Holy Ghost will, if the prayer be granted, be present with all those for whom this communion is supplicated, and present with that influence which is the source of spiritual and immortal life. In other words, the Holy Ghost is here exhibited as omnipresent; and as every where possessing, and at his pleasure communicating, life here, as the commencement of life hereafter.

I shall conclude this discourse with observing, that the divinity of the Spirit of truth furnishes Christians with the most solid foundation for gratitude and joy. It will be seen, in the progress of these discourses, that he is the sum of all the moral blessings introduced into this world by the mediation of Christ. He sanctifies the soul; “brings it out of darkness into marvellous light;” improves it in holiness; conducts it through the temptations and dangers of this life; furnishes it with every gift and grace; prompts it to all virtue and excellence; and fills it with all spiritual enjoyment. For this great work he is abundantly qualified by the possession of infinite perfection; of all that is great, and all that is good. In this world he commences and carries it on. In the future world he advances it to absolute perfection. Through the ages of eternity he will supply, enrich, and adorn the soul with endless virtue, as the means of endless happiness and glory.

THE ATONEMENT.

To the above powerful statements and conclusive reasonings in confirmation of the important doctrines of the divinity of Christ, and the personality of the Holy Spirit, I shall now add the following extracts from the same able writer on the doctrine of the atonement. This may be expressed in the following proposition;—"That it is in consideration of the sacrifice of Christ that God is propitious to sinners."

I. I shall first attempt to show the *nature* of an atonement.

The word atonement, in its original sense, always denotes some amends, or satisfaction, for the neglect of some duty, or the commission of some fault—a satisfaction with which, when supposed to be complete, the person injured ought reasonably to be contented, and to demand of the offender nothing more on ac-

count of his transgression. This satisfaction may, in certain cases, be made by the offender himself. Whenever he has owed some piece of service, and this was all he has owed, he may, if he have failed to perform this duty, atone for the fault by a future service which he did not owe, and which is equivalent to that which he neglected, and to the damage occasioned by his neglect. A servant, who owes an estimated day's work to his master every day, may, if he have neglected to work half a day, atone thus for his fault by such future labour as shall be equivalent to the extent of his neglect, and to the injury occasioned by it to his master. In this case it will be seen, that the atonement respects only the fault which has been committed. The servant owed his master so much labour. The payment of so much labour would be a discharge therefore of the debt. But we do not say that the debt in this case is atoned. The fault only which has been committed in neglecting or refusing to pay in the proper season and manner, demands or admits of an atonement. In every other case where an atonement exists, it is in the same manner a satisfaction for an injury or fault.

In some cases, the party offending cannot atone for his offence, but the atonement, if made at all, must be made vicariously, that is, by the intervention of a third person between the offender and the offended. Of this nature is every case in which the offender owes as ab-

solutely every duty which he could afterwards perform, as he owed that, the non-performance of which constituted his fault. In this case, all his future efforts are necessarily due for the time being, and can therefore never become a satisfaction for faults which are past. Amends for an injury can never be made by services which are due to the injured person on other grounds, and the refusal of which would constitute a new injury. In other words, they must be services rendered only on account of the injury already received. He, therefore, who owes to another all his services for himself, can never become the means of atoning to him for the faults of another. In all cases of vicarious atonement, the substitute must be under no personal obligation to render the services which are to be accepted as a satisfaction of the principal, or, in other words, the offender. Nothing is more plain, than that which is due for himself, cannot be transferred to the account of another.

In every case of personal or vicarious atonement, the services rendered must be of such value as to become a reasonable and full satisfaction for the injury done ;—all that justice can fairly demand or render ;—such as will place the person injured in as good a situation as that which preceded the injury. Where the injury has been great, therefore, or multiplied, the services must also be proportionally great.

An atonement for a crime committed against

a government of any kind, supposes the offender, if he is to receive the benefit of it, to be pardoned. In this case, it must be such as to leave the government in as good a state, as firm, as honourable, as easily and surely efficacious in its future operations, after the offender is pardoned, as it would have been if he had been punished with exact justice. In no other manner can it become a satisfaction for the injury. If all the services of the offender, in this case, were due to the government, after his crime was committed, it would be impossible for the atonement to be made unless by another person.

Sin is a crime committed against the government of God. All the services of sinners are owed to God, for the time being. No future services of any sinner, therefore, can be any satisfaction for his past sins. If an atonement be made in this case, then, it must be made by a substitute ; and this substitute must be able to render services of sufficient value to repair the injury done. In the performance of these services he must leave the Divine government as firm, as honourable, as efficacious in its operations, after the atonement is made, as it was before the crime was committed.

It will perhaps be objected here, that the divine government cannot become less firm, or less honourable, than it originally was, because it is supported in its full strength by infinite power and wisdom. To this objection I answer, that the government of God over his

moral creatures is a *moral government*; that is, a government of rules and motives, or of laws, rewards, and punishments. Such a government, even in the hand of Omnipotence, may become weak and inefficacious in the view of its subjects. A law, which, after it has been violated, is not vindicated by punishing the violator, loses of course a part of its authority. A moral governor will cease to be regarded with veneration, if, when he is insulted by his subjects, he does not inflict on them the proper punishment. A government of mere power may be upheld in its full strength by the exercise of power only. But a moral government cannot be thus preserved, unless the motives to obedience are continued to the view of its subjects in their full force. An atonement for sin, therefore, that is, a complete atonement, must be such as to leave these motives wholly unimpaired. It must consist of such services as, whatever else may be their nature, will, after the sinners are pardoned, leave the government of God in no degree less venerable, less efficacious, or less likely to be punctually obeyed, than before the sins were committed. As these sins have been numerous and very great, it is farther evident, that the services rendered as a satisfaction for them, must be of great value.

I shall next endeavour to show the *necessity* of an atonement.

In order to understand this part of the subject, and I forewarn my hearers that it is a

part of high importance to the subject itself, and to all just views of the Christian system, it will be necessary to bring up to view the state of man, as a transgressor of the divine law.

The language of this law, and its only language, was, "He that doeth these things shall live by them. This do, and thou shalt live. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them." This law God published as the rule by which his own infinite wisdom and rectitude determined to govern the world. Of course, it is a right and just rule. Of course, also, it is a rule which the same wisdom and rectitude are pledged to maintain in its full force. The very reasons for which it was enacted, require with their full strength that it should be also maintained. If it was wise and right to enact it, it was equally wise and right to maintain it. If to enact it was the dictate of infinite wisdom and rectitude, to maintain it must equally be the dictate of the same attributes.

If these observations be admitted, and it is believed that they cannot be refused an admission, it follows of necessity that no sinner can be forgiven, consistently with this law, or the honour of the lawgiver, unless on the ground of an atonement. In the law he had declared, that "the soul which sinneth shall die." To pardon the sinner, without any change from that state of things which existed when the

law was published, would be to declare, by declining to carry the sentence of the law into execution, that infinite wisdom and rectitude had formed new views concerning the sentence of the law, and the demerit of the sinner,—views contrary to those with which the law was published. When the law was published, God declared that the sinner should die. Now he must declare, by pardoning the sinner, that he should not die. Yet no change in the state of things had taken place ; nor is any supposed to have taken place, to occasion this change in the divine conduct. No reason is even supposed, why the conduct of God should be thus changed. The change itself must, of course, be wanton, causeless, and disgraceful to the divine character. If the law was originally just, it was now just. Justice, therefore, required the execution of its penalty upon every transgressor. In pardoning the transgressor, God would declare that the law was not just, in direct contradiction to the declaration which he made of its justice, when he published it as the rule by which he intended to govern the world. If the law was originally wise, it must now be wise to execute it. But in pardoning the sinner, God must declare that the execution of the law was not consistent with wisdom. If the law was originally good ; that is, formed by a benevolent mind, so as to promote benevolent purposes ; it was now equally good. But in pardoning the sinner, God must declare that the execution of the law was inconsistent

with the dictates of benevolence. The change, therefore, manifested in the divine character and conduct, by pardoning the sinner, where no change of circumstances existed to justify it, would, on the one hand, be great and essential; no less than God's denying himself; and, on the other, would be causeless, weak, and contemptible. Can such a change be attributed, even in thought, to the immutable and perfect JEHOVAH?

In the law, God had manifested an infinite love to holiness, and an infinite hatred to sin; or, if the language should be preferred, a supreme love to the one, and a supreme hatred to the other. But, to pardon the sinner without any change in the state of things, would be to treat the sinner and the faithful subject exactly in the same manner, or to treat the sinner in the same manner as if he had faithfully obeyed. Declarations made by conduct are altogether the most solemn and efficacious of all declarations. In this conduct, therefore, God would, in the most solemn manner, declare, that he regarded holiness and sin alike; because he treated the sinner and the saint alike; and that neither of them was an object of his serious regard. The views of a lawgiver are always expressed in the whole of his government, taken together; and from this cannot but be distinctly understood. If his laws are unwise, he will be pronounced to be unwise. If his administration be unwise, he will be considered as sustaining the same character.

If either of them be unjust, he will be pronounced to be unjust. If they be inconsistent, inconsistency will necessarily be attributed to his character. How perfect a violation would this conduct be of the attributes of justice, wisdom, and immutability!

At the same time, all subjects of the divine government would be encouraged to disobedience by these proofs of a changeable, weak, and inconsistent character. Angels, we know, can disobey. This is complete proof that all inferior creatures are capable of the same disobedience. Angels have disobeyed, when, at least, they supposed the law to mean exactly what it threatens, and without the least hope, founded on any declaration of God, of any possible exemption from the penalty actually denounced. Man also disobeyed in the same circumstances. Both also revolted, when, antecedently, they had been only and perfectly holy. In these facts we have complete evidence that no class of holy beings is secure from disobedience, even under a law which gives not a single encouragement of escape to those who disobey. Should such encouragement, then, be holden out by the actual forgiveness, much more by the universal forgiveness, of the penitent, without an atonement, who might not be expected to rebel? Who, when temptation powerfully assailed, and the wish to sin was strongly excited, would not feel assured of his own future repentance, and his consequent safety from future punishment?

Here let me farther remark, 1st, The threatening of the law against transgression is absolute. "The soul that sinneth shall die." In this threatening there is no mention, and plainly no admission, of repentance, as the foundation of escape to the transgressor. If an exception was intended to be made in favour of the penitent, why was it not expressed, or at least hinted, by the law? There is not, that I know, a single intimation of this nature in any of the expressions which it contains. Should it be said, that, although the exception is not made in the words of the law itself, yet it is sufficiently declared in the comments on the law given us by Moses, and the succeeding prophets:—I answer that, wherever these commentators speak of repentance as connected with our escape from the curse of the law, they speak of it either as connected with the atonement of Christ, or not. If they mention it as connected with this atonement, then the objector will be obliged to admit, that the atonement itself is the foundation of the penitent's escape. If they do not speak of it as connected with the atonement, then it follows that the penitent is pardoned under the law, or legal dispensation. An act of pardon is an act of grace, and no act is more eminently gracious or free. To this grace the gospel can add, and does in fact add, nothing material. Grace, therefore, came, according to this supposition, originally by Moses, and not by CHRIST; and the gospel is not the good news, or the glad

tidings of the grace of God, as it is often styled by the writers of it, because the tidings which it professes to bring were long before published by the law.

Farther, it will not be in this case true, that "heaven and earth shall sooner pass away, than one jot or one tittle of the law shall pass, until all be fulfilled." Not only one jot, or one tittle, but the whole penal sentence of the law is, according to this scheme, left, and will for ever be left, unfulfilled, without any other reason to forbid its fulfilment, beside what existed, and was known to exist, at the time when it was published to the world.

2d, The absolute threatening of the law was denounced by God in the exercise of his infinite perfections. When he denounced it, therefore, in this manner, that is, unconditionally, he acted wisely and justly. The denunciation he intended either to execute, or not. If he did not intend to execute it, he acted, so far as I am able to discern, insincerely; because in publishing it he declared, that he would do, what he intended not to do. If he intended to execute it, he will certainly execute it; because no reason exists, in the case supposed, to forbid the execution, which did not exist, in this view, when he published the threatening. It will not be denied, that he foresaw every instance of repentance which would afterwards be exhibited by mankind. As God is immutable, it must, at the least, be conceded, that he cannot be supposed to change

his determinations in any case, especially a case of such importance, where no reason whatever exists for the change beside those which existed when the determination was made.

3d, The repentance of the sinner cannot be an atonement for his crime. Repentance consists in sorrow for sin, confession of it, an acknowledgment of the justice of God in punishing it, resolutions of future obedience, and actual reformation. These things, undoubtedly, constitute an important change in the character of the sinner ; but they alter not the nature or degree of the guilt which he has already incurred. For this he is condemned ; and for this, even according to his own penitential views, he has merited punishment. In what manner does his present penitence affect this guilt ! Certainly in no such sense as to lessen its degree, or desert of punishment. In what manner then can it prevent him from being punished ? Plainly in none, except that which will make amends for the evils which he has committed ; the dishonour which he has done to the law and government of God. But what is there in his repentance which can make these amends ? In what manner will it discover that the character of God, in threatening punishment to his sins, and declining, on account of a repentance originally foreseen, to inflict that punishment, was the same character ; or that God, when he threatened the punishment, and when he refused to execute it, regarded holiness and sin in one unchangeable manner ?

Will his sorrow for sin make it cease to be sin? Will the confession of his guilt make him cease to be guilty? Will his acknowledgment of the justice of the punishment which he has deserved, make it cease to be just? Will his resolutions of amendment, or his actual reformation, efface or lessen the guilt of his past life? None of these things will, I suppose, be pretended. How, then, can the repentance of a sinner become a proper ground for his forgiveness and acceptance? If he is actually forgiven on this ground, it cannot but be seen, and will with truth be said, that God, in the formation and the administration of his law, has acted inconsistently; and that either the law was unjust and unreasonable, or that his failure to execute it was unwise and dishonourable to himself. For this evil, which for aught that appears, may be great beyond any assignable limit, this scheme furnishes, so far as I can see, no remedy.

Let it be farther observed, that the advent of Christ is every where exhibited as fraught with peculiar blessings to mankind. It was published by the angel to the Bethlehem shepherds, as an event, the news of which were "good tidings of great joy." It was sung by his heavenly companions, as the foundation and source of "glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good-will towards men." But if Christ did not make an atonement for sin, it will be difficult, I presume it will be impossible, to point out or to conceive in what re-

spect his advent was of such importance, either to the glory of God, or to the good of mankind. On this ground, he certainly was not the means of pardon to men ; because they are pardoned without his interference. He was not the means even of publishing this pardon ; for it had been published long before, and amply, by the prophets of the Old Testament. “ A broken heart, and a contrite spirit,” says David, “ thou wilt not despise.” “ Let the wicked forsake his way,” says Isaiah, “ and the unrighteous man his thoughts ; and let him turn to the Lord, for he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”

If Christ made an atonement for the sins of mankind, all the magnificent expressions concerning his mission and character, the declarations that he is the only Saviour of mankind, and that “ there is salvation in no other,” are easily understood ; if not, I am unable to see how they can be explained. Particularly, I am unable to discern how God is so solemnly said to be peculiarly glorified by the mission of Christ ; for, according to this scheme, he was sent for no purpose which had not been accomplished before ; and which might not, for aught that appears, have been accomplished afterwards, without his appearance in the world.

Respecting the *existence* of an atonement for sin, it is hardly necessary to observe here, that, as all our knowledge of this subject is revealed, all proofs of the fact in question must be

derived from Revelation. The proofs which I shall allege, I shall arrange under the following heads:—

1. Those passages of Scripture which speak of Christ as a propitiation for sin.

These are, Rom. iii. 24—26; 1 John ii. 2; and 1 John iv. 10. The first of these claims, in the first place, our consideration. Here it is declared, that God has set forth Christ “to be a propitiation.”

A propitiation for sin is the means by which God is rendered merciful to sinners. Christ is here declared to be the propitiation. But the only possible sense, in which Christ can have become the means of rendering God merciful to sinners, is by making an atonement for them. This atonement I have explained to consist in making sufficient amends for the faults which they have committed, and placing the law and government of God in such a situation, that when sinners are pardoned, both shall be equally honourable and efficacious as before. The motives to obedience, also, must in no degree be lessened. Farther: the character of God, when pardoning sinners, must appear perfectly consistent with itself, and exactly expressed by the law. Finally: God must be seen to be no less opposed to sin, and no less delighted with holiness, than when the law was formed.

The doctrine is completely established then, by this text. God is here said to have set forth Christ “to declare his righteousness,”

or, as it is better rendered by Macknight, “for a proof of his own righteousness in passing by the sins which were before committed, through the forbearance of God ; for a proof, also, of his righteousness at the present time, in order that he may be just, when justifying him who believeth in Jesus.” In this passage, the end for which Christ was set forth to be a propitiation, is asserted to be, that Christ might declare, or be a proof of the righteousness of God, in passing by, or remitting sins which were past ; and of his righteousness, also, at the present time, when justifying believers. In these assertions we are taught, in the most unambiguous manner, that unless Christ had been set forth as a propitiation, the righteousness of God, in remitting past and present sins, would not have been manifested. It is also declared in the same decisive manner, that if Christ had not been set forth as a propitiation, God would not have been just, when justifying believers. Christ, therefore, in the character of a propitiation, and only in this character, has made the pardoning, or justification of sinners, consistent with the justice of God. To pardon sinners, therefore, without a propitiation, would have been inconsistent with divine justice, and of course impossible.

The same doctrine is farther confirmed by St. John, who, in his first epistle, ii. 2, and iv. 10, declares, that Christ “is a propitiation for our sins.” The word, used in both these passages, is *ἱλασμος* ; the proper English of

which is "a propitiation," a propitiatory sacrifice, or sin-offering. The word is often used by the Seventy; and appropriately signifies, in their use of it, a sacrifice of atonement.

2. Those passages of Scripture which speak of Christ as a ransom for mankind. These are Matth. xx. 28; the corresponding passage in Mark x. 45; and 1st of Tim. ii. 6. The passage in Matthew is, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Of the same nature are all those passages, which declare that we are redeemed by Christ.

For example, Eph. i. 7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood." Rev. v. 9, "Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Gal. iii. 13, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." In all these, and various other passages of the New Testament, it is declared, that "Christ redeemed us:" that is, he brought us out from the bondage and condemnation of sin "by his blood," and by "being made a curse for us," in that he died upon the accursed tree. It will be unnecessary to multiply words, to shew that exactly the same thing is here taught, as in those passages where Christ is declared to have "given himself as a ransom."

3. Those passages in which Christ is spoken of as a substitute for mankind.

These are very numerous, and of many forms. A few of them only can be recited at the present time. "Surely," says Isaiah, "he has

borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.” “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” “The Lord has laid upon him the iniquity of us all. For the transgression of my people was he stricken.” “By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.” “When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.” “For he shall bear their iniquities.” “And he bare the sin of many*.” These passages can need no explanation. Language cannot more clearly or more strongly assert, that Christ was a substitute for sinners; that he bore their sins, and suffered for their iniquities; or, in other words, that he became an atonement for them.

Daniel, in his 9th chapter, recites, from the mouth of Gabriel, the following words, “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people;—to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness,—and to anoint the most Holy.” In the following verse, he farther informs us, that, at the end of the seventy weeks, the “MESSIAH should be cut off, but not for himself.” Accordingly, at the end of seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, “from the going forth of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem,” published by Artaxerxes Longimanus,

* Isaiah liii.

the "MESSIAH was cut off, but not for himself;" that is, within four years after he had been anointed by the Holy Ghost, according to the same prediction. The effect of his being cut off was to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity.

1 Cor. xv. 3, "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures." Here it is not only asserted, that "Christ died for our sins;" but this fact is said to have taken place according to the general tenor of the Scriptures. The same doctrine is taught by Christ himself, first to Cleophas and his companion, and next to the eleven. Luke xxiv. 25, 26, 45, 46, "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to have entered into his glory? Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures; and said unto them, Thus it is written; and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." In both these passages, our Saviour asserts his death to have been due, or necessary; because it had been before declared by the prophets, and in the Scriptures; reproves the two disciples for not thus understanding and believing the prophets; and teaches them that this is the substance of all which the prophets had spoken; and the eleven, that to understand this great fact in a proper manner, is to understand the Scriptures themselves at large.

Gal. i. 4, "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this evil world." Hebrews i. 3, "When he had by himself purged our sins." 1 Peter ii. 24, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree; that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." I John iii. 5, "He was manifested to take away our sins." Rev. i. 5, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God."

In every one of these passages, as well as many others, it is evident beyond all debate, that Christ stood in the place of mankind, bore their sins, and healed them by the stripes which he suffered; that our iniquities were laid on him; that he washed our sins away; became a curse for us; was wounded for our transgressions; made reconciliation for iniquity; and was cut off, not for himself, but for mankind. The same doctrine is taught with equal precision in many other forms of expression; but, I presume, it is unnecessary to add any thing farther on this part of the subject.

4. I argue the same doctrine from those passages, in which we are said to be "forgiven," or "saved," for his sake, or in his name.

Acts iv. 12, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts xiii. 38, "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through

this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." 1 John ii. 12, "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake." 1 Cor. vi. 11, "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus." Eph. iv. 32, "Even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Now, it is plain that we cannot be forgiven, washed, justified, or saved, for the sake of Christ, unless Christ was, in some sense or other, a substitute for us, stood in our place, did something which we had failed to do, made amends for faults which we had committed, or, in other words, made that atonement for sin which God was pleased to accept.

On this ground, we are required to offer up our prayers to God in the name of Christ. In John xvi. 23, our Saviour says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." And again, "At that day ye shall ask in my name." And in John xiv. 13, 14, "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." See also John xv. 16. St. Paul also, (Colos. iii. 17.) "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus; giving thanks to God, and the Father by him." The direction given to

us to offer up our prayers and thanksgivings in the name of Christ, and the promise that in this case, and in this only, we shall be heard, teaches us in the strongest manner, that our prayers are acceptable to God for his sake, and not our own ; and that, in offering them, we are to rely wholly for acceptance, and for blessings of every kind, on what he has done, and not on what we have ourselves done. Of course, the audience and acceptance which are granted, and the blessings which are given to us, are granted and given for the sake of Christ, and not for our own sakes. But no reason can be alleged why blessings should be given to us for the sake of Christ, unless he has interfered in some manner or other in our behalf, and done something for us which has made it pleasing and proper in the sight of God to give us blessings on this account, which otherwise he would not have thought it proper to give. If God will not give us blessings on our own account, it is undoubtedly because we have done something which renders it improper for him thus to give them. Otherwise, the same benevolence which feeds the sparrow and the raven, would certainly be ready to bless us. We, therefore, by our sins have forfeited our title to all blessings, and even to the privilege of asking for them. If God will give us blessings on account of Christ, it is certain that Christ has done something for us which has removed this impropriety, and which God accepts on our behalf, notwithstanding the for-

feiture. In other words, he has made it consistent with the honour of the divine character and government, that the benevolence which we had forfeited should be renewedly exercised towards us.

5thly, I argue the same doctrine from the sacrifices under the law of Moses.

St. Paul tells us, that the ancient "tabernacle was a **FIGURE** for the present time." In the service performed in it, victims were continually offered under the name of sin-offerings; and by them an atonement was made for the sins, and for the souls, of the people. On this subject, the passages which declare the doctrine here specified, are found almost everywhere in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers; and cannot need to be repeated at this time. But we know, from the same apostle, that "it is not possible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sin." Yet this blood is said, in thirty or forty passages, to be the means of making an atonement for those who offered it. In what manner was this true? St. Paul himself has taught us that it was true in the typical or figurative sense only. All these sacrifices, as he has taught us expressly in the 9th and 10th chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews, were only types of the sacrifice of Christ; and the atonement, professedly made by them, was only a type of the real atonement made by him. Particularly, the ceremonial of the sacrifice on the great day of expiation, when the high priest made an atone-

ment for himself, his family, the priests, and the whole congregation of Israel, was a remarkable and most lively type of the death and resurrection of Christ. On this day, the tenth day of the seventh month annually, two goats were selected for an offering to God. One of these was killed, and his blood was sprinkled upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat, and upon the horns of the altar. This was called making an atonement for the holy place, and reconciling the holy place, the tabernacle, and the altar, unto God, as having been polluted during the preceding year by the imperfect and impure services of sinful beings. On the head of the living goat "the high priest laid both his hands, and confessed over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and sent him away by a fit man into the wilderness." Of this goat it was said, that "he should bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited." This religious service cannot, I think, need any explanation.

Respecting the *manner* in which the atonement was performed, I observe,

1st, That in my own view, all the sufferings of Christ were included in the atonement which he made for sin.

Christ was perfectly holy. No part of his sufferings, therefore, can have been inflicted or undergone for his own sake. He was always beloved of God; and whatever he thought, spoke, or did, was ever well-pleasing in his sight. When therefore we are told, that it

“pleased Jehovah to bruise him,” it was not as a punishment ; for he never merited punishment ;—not a wanton, causeless infliction ; for God cannot be the author of such an infliction. It was only as a substitute for mankind that he was afflicted in any case, or in any degree, or because he had “laid on him the iniquities of us all.”

2dly, The death of Christ, together with its preceding and attendant agonies, especially constituted his atonement.

This must, I think, have been already made evident from many passages quoted under the third head of discourse, as proofs of the existence of an atonement for sin. I shall, however, add to these several others, which must, it would seem, place the point now in question beyond a doubt.

In the text it is said that “Christ is set forth as a propitiation, through faith in his blood.” But if the blood of Christ was not the means of his becoming a propitiation, it is difficult to conceive in what sense his blood can be the object of our faith, any more than the blood of Jeremiah, Peter, Paul, or any other martyr to the truth of God. “But if we walk in the light,” says St. John, “the blood of his Son Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.” Eph. i. 7, “In whom we have redemption through his blood ; the forgiveness of sins ; according to the riches of his grace.” Eph. ii. 13, “But now, in Christ Jesus, ye, who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood

of Christ." 1 Peter i. 18, 19, "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Rev. i. 5, "Who washed us from our sins in his blood." Rev. v. 9, "Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Rom. v. 9, "Being justified by his blood." In these passages it is directly asserted that mankind are washed, cleansed, justified, forgiven, redeemed, and made nigh unto God by the blood of Christ." He who admits the existence of an atonement, cannot, with these declarations in view, hesitate to admit also, that it was accomplished by his blood, that is, by his death and its connected sufferings. The views of Christ himself concerning this subject cannot easily be mistaken, if we remember that he said that "he came to give his life a ransom for many; that the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever. And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world," John vi. 51.

3dly, The peculiar agonies which preceded and attended the death of Christ, and in which the atonement made by him for sin peculiarly consisted, were chiefly distresses of mind, and not of body. This I think evident from many considerations.

(1.) There is no reason, so far as I can see, to suppose that the bodily sufferings of Christ

were more severe, or even so severe, as those which have been experienced by many others.

The death of the cross was undoubtedly a very distressing death. But it was probably less distressing than that experienced by many of the martyrs. Some of these were roasted by a slow fire. Some were dislocated on the rack, and suffered to expire under long continued tortures. Some had their flesh taken off piece by piece, in a very gradual manner, with red-hot pincers. Others expired under various other kinds of exquisite sufferings, devised by the utmost ingenuity of man, and protracted with the utmost cruelty. Multitudes of these martyrs, however, have sustained all their distresses without a complaint, and expired without a groan.

Multitudes also, both of martyrs and others, have died on the cross itself, and, for aught that appears, with bodily anguish not inferior to that which Christ endured. Yet of these, it would seem, numbers have died in the same peaceful manner. Even the thieves who were crucified together with our Saviour, seem to have died without any complaint.

Yet Christ uttered a very bitter complaint on the cross, and complained also in a similar manner in the garden of Gethsemane. Whence arose these complaints? Not from his want of resignation to the will of God; for no other person was ever so resigned:—not from the want of fortitude; for no other person ever possessed it in an equal degree. The very complaints which he utters do not appear to

have any respect to his bodily sufferings, but to have originated entirely from a different cause, and that cause purely mental.

It is gratifying to observe how the same subject strikes different individuals, and how, amidst these minor differences of opinion which will always mark an independent mind, such as draw their information on this important subject from the Scriptures, though placed in different circumstances, and in different parts of the world, come to the same conclusion. I shall here, therefore, subjoin an extract or two from Dr. Wardlaw's well known volume on the Socinian Controversy.—The following observations occur in the discourse on the doctrine of the atonement, founded on Rom. iii. 25, 26. “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;—to declare at this time his righteousness, that he may be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.”

The first proposition he here endeavours to illustrate, is, that “It is in consideration of the sacrifice of Christ that God is propitious to sinners.”—Here, after stating his reasons for concluding that the original word in this text rendered *propitiation*, properly denotes *propitiatory*, or mercy-seat, he thus proceeds:—

“According to the meaning thus assigned to

the word, we have, in the text, an allusion to the mercy-seat under the law, as a type of Jesus Christ, and of the effects, as will appear, of his atoning sacrifice.—To the institution of the mercy-seat, we must therefore look, that we may rightly understand the allusion. It is to be found in Exod. xxv. 17—22. “And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold; of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy-seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end; even of the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubim on the two ends thereof. And the cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim that are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things that I will give thee in commandment to the children of Israel.”

It is from this description that Jehovah receives the appellation of—the God that *dwell-eth between the cherubim* *; an appellation

* 2 Kings xix. 15. Psalm lxxx. 1.

which may consequently be interpreted as of equivalent import with the New Testament characters—"the God of peace"—"the God of all grace."—The position of the propitiatory upon the ark of the testimony, might be intended to indicate the consistency of his appearing in this benign character, for the purpose of communing with his guilty creatures, with the claims and sanctions of his righteous law. So that when Jehovah, the God of Israel, "shone forth" from between the cherubim, "mercy and truth" might be said to "meet together, righteousness and peace to embrace each other."

Surely this cannot fail to remind you of Him, who "received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED!" It is *in him*, as the subject either of promise, of prophecy, of typical institution, or of direct testimony, that God has, all along from the beginning, made himself known to men, as "*the God of peace.*" It is in him that he "reconciles the guilty to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them *."

Had nothing further been said respecting the mercy-seat, we might have been led to conclude, that Jehovah appeared there in the exercise of *mere* mercy; I mean of mercy, unconnected with any kind of *satisfaction for*

* 2 Pet. i. 17. Matt. xvii. 5. 2 Cor. v. 19.

sin. With the description of the propitiatory itself, we must, however, connect the account which is elsewhere given of the manner in which it was to be approached by the worshipper; the high-priest being expressly enjoined to draw near to Him who dwelt between the cherubim, both in his own behalf, and in behalf of the people, according to certain prescribed rites. A particular account of these is contained in the sixteenth chapter of the book of Leviticus, of which a few verses will show you their general nature, sufficiently for our present purpose. Verses 2, 3, 11—15, “And the Lord said unto Moses, speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place, within the vail, before the mercy-seat, which is upon the ark, that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat. Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place; with a young bullock for a sin-offering, and a ram for a burnt-offering. And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin-offering which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin-offering which is for himself. And he shall take a censer full of burning coals from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail. And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not. And he shall take of

the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy-seat eastward ; and before the mercy-seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times. Then shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat."

This *goat of the sin-offering*, as we learn from the intermediate verses, was one of two, which Aaron was to take from the congregation of Israel :—and after *it* had been thus offered in sacrifice, and its blood brought within the vail, the remaining goat, with all the iniquities of the children of Israel laid upon its head, by the solemn vicarious confession of the high-priest, was to be sent off alive into the wilderness, bearing away, emblematically, as a devoted victim, this load of *atoned* and *acknowledged* guilt.—The figure was necessarily *double* : the slain goat typifying the atonement of Christ, and the scape-goat representing its efficacy.

But the circumstance which I wish at present to impress particularly on your attention is, that the mercy-seat was to be approached *with blood* ;—with the blood of *atonement* ; for such it is, in various parts of the chapter, expressly declared to have been *. This blood was to be brought within the vail, and to be

* See verses 6, 30, 34, &c.

sprinkled on and before the mercy-seat ; and, while the sacrificial blood was thus presented, the burning incense was, by the cloud of ascending smoke, to diffuse its grateful fragrance, in emblematic testimony of the Divine satisfaction :—and this satisfaction is, accordingly, elsewhere expressed, in connection with the sacrifice of Christ, and with the offerings by which it was typified, by Jehovah's *smelling a sweet savour* *.

The mercy-seat, then, in order to Jehovah's appearing there as the God of grace, consistently with the glory of his name, must, it appears, be stained with the “ blood of sprinkling,” the “ blood that maketh atonement for the soul.” The reason why the blood was specifically appointed for this purpose is emphatically assigned in the subsequent chapter of the book of Leviticus, “ *For the life of the flesh is in the blood ; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls : for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul* †.” The blood, then, was the atonement for the soul, because it was the *life* of the victim : and because it was the appointed atonement for the soul, it was to be held sacred, on pain of death.

It is true that, in the chapter of Leviticus first referred to, atonement is said to be made

* Compare Gen. viii. 21, with Eph. v. 3, Rev. viii. 3, 4, Psal. cxlii. 2.

† Chapter xvii. 11.

for places, and for instruments of service, as well as for persons. “And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the Lord, and shall make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and shall put it upon the horns of the altar round about. And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel *.” On this subject, it has been justly remarked, that the atonement prescribed by the Levitical law “produced, in all cases, the effect of *fitting for the Divine service*. This, in such as involved no consideration of moral character, (as in the consecration of inanimate things, or the atonement for persons labouring under ceremonial impurities,) could consist only in the removal of the external impurity; for in such cases, this impediment alone existed:—whilst in those in which moral character *was* concerned, (as in cases of sin, whereby man, having incurred the displeasure of God, had disqualified himself for the offices of his worship,) the unfitness could have been removed only by

* Lev. xvi. 16, 18, 19.

such means as, at the same time, removed that displeasure, and restored the offender to the Divine favour : or, in other words, the atonement was, in such cases, an act of *propitiation* *.”

This distinction seems to be reasonable and obvious. I would further remark, however, as a good deal of stress is laid by the adversaries of the atonement on the circumstance I am now considering, that, in the verses last read, there is a marked connection between the atonement for the holy place and for the instruments of Divine service, and the pollution and guilt of the children of Israel. It is from *their* guilt and pollution that the necessity for such atonement is represented as arising :—so that the atonement for the holy place, the tabernacle, and the altar, is still in some sense an atonement for the sins of the people, which are considered as cleaving to, and polluting, and unfitting for the service of God, the places and the instruments of their worship. Of this the verses last quoted are, of themselves, a sufficient evidence. The apostle Paul, in a similar manner, connects the two ideas of “purifying with blood the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry,” and of the atonement made, by the same means, “for the errors of the people †.”

The law, then, I must now observe, (and

* Magee on Atonement and Sacrifice, vol. i. p. 330.

† See Heb. ix. 19—22.

with the observation I shall conclude the illustration of the type)—the law, by which it was enjoined, on pain of death, that the mercy-seat should not be approached otherwise than *with blood*, strikingly represented the necessity of the shedding of the blood of Christ, in order to his being the *true propitiatory*; that is, in order to God's being "IN HIM WELL PLEASED," and thus accessible to sinners, as supplicants for mercy. And, agreeably to this, it may be noticed, that the declaration of God's satisfaction in his beloved Son, which came from "the excellent glory" on "the holy mount," was connected with the subject of conference between Jesus and his heavenly visitants,—"*the decease which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem.*"

The first of our propositions is further confirmed, by the correspondence of the current language of Scripture with the meaning of this particular type, as it has now been explained. The doctrine of atonement, or propitiation, pervades the whole of the inspired volume. The following passages and expressions are only a selection, to which a great many more of a similar kind might be added. "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquities of us all."—"For the transgression of

my people was he stricken.”—“Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin.”—“He shall bear their iniquities.”—“He bare the sin of many.”—“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”—“The Son of Man is come—to give his life a ransom for many.”—“This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins.”—“The bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”—“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.”—“Who gave himself for our sins.”—“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.”—“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.”—“Who gave himself a ransom for all.”—“Now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”—“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot unto God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God?”—“Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s; for this

“ he did once, when he offered up himself.”—
 “ He made him who knew no sin, to be sin
 for us ; that we might be made the righteous-
 ness of God in him.”—“ Who, his own self,
 bare our sins in his own body on the tree.”—
 “ For Christ also hath once suffered for sins,
 the just for the unjust, that he might bring
 us unto God.”—“ The blood of Jesus Christ
 his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”—“ And he
 is the propitiation for our sins ; and not for
 ours only, but also for the sins of the whole
 world.”—“ Unto him that loved us, and wash-
 ed us from our sins in his own blood, be glory
 and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”—
 “ Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to
 God by thy blood *.”

If such passages as these, which are taken
 from the prophets, from John the Baptist, from
 Christ himself, and from his apostles, do not
 convey the ideas of substitution and atone-
 ment, is it possible, by human language, to
 convey these ideas at all ? What other words
 and phrases would we select, if it were our
 special desire to express them more distinctly ?

In these passages, you will have perceived,
 there is a very frequent reference, when the
 death of Christ is spoken of, to the *sacrifices*

* Isa. liii. 5, 6, 7, 12. John i. 29. Matt. xx. 28.
 xxvi. 28. John vi. 51. Rom. v. 6—9. Gal. i. 4. iii. 13.
 Eph. i. 7. 1 Tim. ii. 6. Heb. ix. 26, 14. vii. 27. 2 Cor.
 v. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 24. iii. 18. 1 John i. 7. ii. 2. Rev. i.
 5, 6. v. 9.

of the Old dispensation. Now, although the victims which were slain at the altar, and “whose blood was brought into the sanctuary by the high-priest for sin,” could not, by any virtue of their own, take away the guilt of transgression, so as to save the sinner from its future eternal punishment:—(this the apostle affirms was not “possible,” and its impossibility was indicated by the constant repetition of the same stated offerings:) yet they were, beyond all reasonable question, propitiatory in their nature:—“their blood was brought into the sanctuary *for sin* ;” and they procured, when duly offered, the remission of its temporal consequences. Some of them were appointed for ceremonial omissions and uncleannesses, and others for the transgression of precepts more directly of a moral nature. But the general idea of atonement pervades and characterises the whole. It seems to have been the principle on which the Mosaic law was framed, that “*without shedding of blood there could be no remission.*” In this marked and prominent feature of its character, it was prefigurative of the true atonement that was to be made for sin in “the fulness of time.” It was in this way especially,—by typical illustration,—that God’s method of justifying the ungodly was, as the apostle expresses it in the 20th verse, “*witnessed by the law.*” Divest these rites of their typical import, and they become utterly unworthy of the wisdom by which they were appointed. Worthless in

themselves, their sole value arose from their being "figures of that which was to come." And from their nature, as described in the law, they could not, if they were types at all, be typical of any thing else than of a true and proper sacrifice for sin.

The next proposition illustrated by Dr. Wardlaw is, that "In pardoning the guilty on the ground of the sacrifice of Christ, God displays his own righteousness." On this point there is so much powerful reasoning and good sense in the following paragraphs, that I quote them with pleasure, as calculated to give the reader the fullest satisfaction on this important subject.

The proper idea of *propitiation* is, *rendering the Divine Being propitious or favourable.*—We must beware, however, of understanding by this, any thing like a change in the Divine character; as if the blessed God required a motive to pity, an inducement to be merciful, a price for love and grace. Far be such a thought from our minds! We ought to conceive of Jehovah as eternally, infinitely, and immutably, compassionate and merciful. That any transition is produced in his nature, by the mediation of Christ, from previous vindictive cruelty to benevolence and pity, (as the adversaries of the doctrine of the atonement are, either through ignorance, or from a worse prin-

ciple, accustomed to speak) is a supposition full of blasphemous impiety. God has been from eternity, and to eternity must continue, the same; “without variableness or shadow of turning.” Being absolutely perfect, he cannot change to the better; for perfection cannot be improved. The slightest alteration, therefore, of what he is, would deduct from that infinite excellence, without which he could not be God.—But while God is infinitely and immutably *good*, he is, at the same time, infinitely and immutably *holy*, and *just*, and *true*. We ought never, indeed, to speak of him as acting at one time according to justice, and at another according to mercy; if by this mode of expression it be meant, that in any part of his procedure, in the smallest possible degree, the claims either of mercy or of justice are ever suspended, or left out of view. He never acts in opposition to the one, or to the other, but always agreeably to both. He is never just without being merciful, nor merciful without being just.

The character of God is, PERFECT EXCELLENCE—INFINITE GOODNESS:—not a hemisphere of separate stars, but one glorious sun of pure and holy light. The attributes which constitute this character, although we may speak of them, and reason about them, distinctly, are completely inseparable in their exercise;—united in the *conduct* of the Almighty Agent, by the same necessity which unites them in his *nature*. That nature being one

and immutable, with no part of it can any step of his procedure ever be inconsistent ; but all should be considered as the result, not of one attribute, or of another, but of that glorious combination of all excellencies, which constitutes INFINITE PERFECTION. The light of the sun we can divide, by a prism, into its various coloured rays ; and each of these rays we can make the object of distinct attention :—but it is the combination of all the seven that constitutes *light*, of which its colourless purity is the prime excellence. Thus may we make the various perfections of the Divine nature the subjects, one by one, of separate consideration :—but it is the union of them all, in inseparable existence and exercise, that forms the character of that infinite Being, of whom it is said, “ GOD IS LIGHT ; AND IN HIM IS NO DARKNESS AT ALL.”

What, then, is the light in which the doctrine of atonement places the Divine Being ? In reply to this question, I observe,—that, as a righteous Lawgiver and Ruler, Jehovah must be considered as displeased with his guilty creatures, on account of their violation of his authority, whilst, at the same time, from the infinite benignity of his nature, he is inclined to forgiveness. But if his government be righteous, its claims, in their full extent, must, of necessity, be preserved inviolate. Any change in these must be a change from right to wrong, and must affect both the immutable holiness of the Divine character, and the general good of

the universe. The principles of the Divine administration, the commands and the sanctions of God's law, if admitted to have been originally right, can never undergo alteration; for alteration of any kind, even in the way of mitigation or reduction, implies the acknowledgment of error in the first enactments.

The great question, then, on this momentous subject, comes to be,—“*IN WHAT MANNER may forgiveness be extended to the guilty, so as to satisfy the claims of infinite justice, and thus to maintain in their full dignity, free from every charge of imperfection or of mutability, the character of the Governor, the rectitude of his administration, and the sanction of his law?*”

The rendering of the Divine Being propitious, in this view, refers, it is obvious, (and the distinction is one of great importance on this subject) not to the *production* of love in his character, or in the particular state of his mind towards fallen men, but simply to the *mode of its expression*. The inquiry is, How may the blessed God express his love, so as effectually to express, at the same time, his infinite and immutable abhorrence of sin; and thus, in “making known the riches of his mercy,” to display, in connection with it, the inflexibility of his justice, and the unsullied perfection of his holiness?

When we say that God is displeased with any of his creatures, we speak of them not as *creatures*, but as *sinner*s. He hath sworn by himself, that “he hath no pleasure in the

death of the wicked." But he hates sin:—not as possessing any power to affect his own infinite, independent, and unchanging happiness and glory, (I mean his *essential* glory;) for as to these, it may well be asked, "Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous, or is it gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect? Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? Will he enter with thee into judgment?" "If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thy hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art; and thy righteousness may profit the son of man*." But he hates sin—as contrary to his holy nature, hiding his glory from the eyes of his intelligent creatures, and, in proportion to the extent of its prevalence, tending to the destruction of the order and happiness of the universe. When we speak of *hatred* as existing in the infinite mind, we ought, it is true, to beware of associating with it any idea of passion or turbulent emotion. But to make it a question whether God be displeased with sin, and with sinners, is to confound good and evil together; to divest the human mind of all its salutary fears of judgment to come; and to dispute the

* Job xxii. 2—4. xxxv. 6—8.

propriety of God's own language on this momentous subject. In the Scriptures we find it affirmed, that God is "*angry with the wicked every day ;*" that he "*hateth all the workers of iniquity ;*" that he hath "*revealed from heaven his wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men ;*"—and the "*children of disobedience*" are denominated "*children of wrath.*" When God, on the other hand, forgives iniquity, he is, in perfect consistency with such expressions, represented as "*turning from the fierceness of his anger, and taking away all his wrath ;*" as "*not retaining his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy ;*"—as "*pacified*" towards the objects of his forgiveness, "*notwithstanding all that they have done :*"—and they who before were "*children of wrath,*" are described as then saying, with holy and humble joy, "*O Lord, I will praise thee ; for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away.*" This is PROPITIATION : and it is in *Christ Jesus*, as we have already seen, that God is thus propitious to sinners.

The *righteousness* of God is *declared*, or made manifest, by the infliction of the penalty of transgression on the person of Jesus Christ, as the voluntary surety and substitute of the guilty. This, it is freely admitted, is not according to the precise *letter* of the Divine law : for that law, like every other, requires, of course, the personal punishment of the offender : "*The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*"

But the *spirit* of the law is as fully preserved; the ends of justice as effectually answered; the dignity and authority of the Divine Lawgiver as completely secured, by the sufferings of a sufficient and voluntary substitute, as by the sufferings of the guilty transgressors themselves. Nay, if, as in the case before us, this willing surety is, in nature and dignity, transcendantly superior to the sinner in whose room he appears, these ends may be answered with even much more impressive effect in the one way than in the other.

The righteous God has given to his creatures a righteous law, accompanied with the threatening of a righteous penalty. If the law and the penalty were both originally righteous, they must remain immutably so. If the law, when given, required no more than what is right, how can it, without bringing a reflection on the perfect wisdom and unchanging rectitude of the Divine character, ever require less? If the penalty, by the threatening of which obedience was originally enforced, contained in it no more than what is strictly just, how can this penalty, without giving rise to the very same kind of reflection, be remitted, or even mitigated?

The two great ends of *public justice* are, the glory of God, and, in connection with it, the general good of his creatures. It is essentially necessary to the attainment of these ends, that the authority of the government of God should be supported, in all its extent, as inviolably

sacred; that one jot or one tittle should in no wise pass from the law; that no sin of any kind, or in any degree, should appear as venial; that if any sinner is pardoned, it should be in such a way as, while it displays the Divine mercy, shall at the same time testify the Divine abhorrence of his sins. All this is gloriously effected in the gospel by means of ATONEMENT;—by the substitution of a voluntary surety, even of him whose name is Immanuel, to bear the curse of the law in the room of the guilty. In his substitution, we see displayed, in a manner unutterably affecting and awful, the *holy purity* of the Divine nature; for no testimony can be conceived more impressive, of infinite abhorrence of sin, than the sufferings and death of the Son of God. Here, too, we behold the *immutable justice* of the Divine government, inflicting the righteous penalty of a violated law. It is to be considered as a fixed principle of the Divine government, that *sin must be punished*; that if the sinner is pardoned, it must be in a way that *marks and publishes the evil of his offence*. This is effected by substitution; and, as far as we can judge, could not be effected in any other way. In inflicting the sentence against transgression on the voluntary and all-sufficient Surety, JEHOVAH, while he clears the sinner, does not clear his sins:—although clothed with the thunders of vindictive justice against transgression, he wears to the transgressor the smile of reconciliation and peace;

—he dispenses the blessings of mercy from the throne of his holiness ;—and, while exercising grace to the guilty, he appears in the character—equally lovely and venerable—of

—— the sinner's friend,
And sin's eternal foe !

In this way, then, all the ends of *public justice* are fully answered. The law retains its complete unmitigated perfection ; is “ magnified and made honourable ;” the dignity and authority of the government are maintained, and even elevated ; all the perfections of Deity are gloriously illustrated, and exhibited in sublime harmony ;—while the riches of mercy are displayed, for the encouragement of sinners to return to God, the solemn lesson is at the same time taught, by a most convincing example, that rebellion cannot be persisted in with impunity ; and motives are thus addressed to the fear of evil, as well as to the desire of good :—such a view of the Divine Being is presented in the cross, as is precisely calculated to inspire and to maintain (to maintain, too, with a power which will increase in influence the more closely and seriously the view is contemplated) the two great principles of a holy life—the LOVE, and the FEAR OF GOD ;—filial attachment, freedom, and confidence, combined with humble reverence and holy dread.

After these quotations, as well as the reasonings of Dr. Dwight, which are found in the preceding pages, every reader will be fully prepared, I trust, to acquiesce in the following observations on the supreme importance of those subjects involved in the Socinian controversy, and which are introduced by Dr. Wardlaw in an early part of his volume:—

Contemplate, says he, the subject of the supreme divinity of Jesus Christ, *in the first place, in its own nature.* There are some doctrines which we at once perceive, as soon as they are stated, I do not say to be of no value, (for nothing which God has been pleased to make known is destitute of value,) but to be doctrines of comparatively minor consequence; while there are others which we as immediately discern to be of essential and vital importance. To the latter of these classes the doctrine before us will, without hesitation, be referred by every reflecting mind. If it be indeed a truth, that Jesus Christ is “**GOD OVER ALL,**” it is utterly impossible that it can be a truth of subordinate magnitude. The simple statement of it is enough to show that it must rank as a *first principle*; an article of prime importance;—a foundation-stone in the temple of truth;—a star of the very first magnitude in the hemisphere of Christian doctrine. For my own part, I believe it to be even more than this; a kind of central sun,

around which the whole system of Christianity, in all its glory, and in all its harmony, revolves.

This view of its importance is confirmed, when we consider it, *secondly*, in its connection with our most interesting and solemn duties. I mean the duties which we owe to the great object of supreme reverence, worship, and obedience. If Jesus Christ be not God, then we, who offer to him that homage of our hearts which is due to God alone, are, without doubt, guilty of *idolatry*; as really guilty as the worshippers of the deified heroes of Greece or Rome. We are guilty, like them, of “changing the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man;” of thus alienating the honours of Him who hath declared, that he “will not give his glory to another.” This surely is no trifle. But is it, on the other hand, a trifle;—is it fitted to excite no serious concern, no uneasy apprehension, to withhold Divine honour from one to whom it is due? to divest of his supreme dignity, and to equalize with ourselves, puny worms of the dust, one whom angels and archangels adore, as “over all, God blessed for ever?” Consequences of such magnitude, on both sides, certainly stamp with immense importance the inquiry on which we are now entering.

The same thing is manifest, *thirdly*, from the intimate relation which this doctrine bears to others. It is an integral part of a system of

truths, which stand or fall along with it. It is connected, for example, in the closest manner, with the purpose of Christ's appearance upon earth, and the great design of his sufferings and death; that is, with the vitally important doctrine of *atonement*: *this* doctrine, again, is inseparably connected with the corruption of human nature, and the universal guilt of mankind; from which it is that the necessity of such atonement arises: this, in its turn, essentially affects the question respecting the true ground of a sinner's acceptance with God; the necessity of the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit; the principle and motive of all acceptable obedience; and other points of similar consequence. It is very obvious, that two systems, of which the sentiments on subjects such as these are in direct opposition, cannot, with any propriety, be confounded together under one common name. That both should be Christianity, is impossible; else Christianity is a term which distinguishes nothing. Viewing the matter abstractly, and without affirming for the present what is truth and what is error, this, I think, I may with confidence affirm, that to call schemes so opposite in all their great leading articles, by a common appellation, is more absurd than it would be to confound together those two irreconcilable theories of astronomy, of which the one places the earth, and the other the sun, in the centre of the planetary system. They are, in truth, *essentially differ-*

ent religions. For if opposite views as to the *object of worship, the ground of hope for eternity, the rule of faith and duty, and the principles and motives of true obedience* ;—if these do not constitute different religions, we may, without much difficulty, discover some principle of union and identity, amongst all religions whatever ; we may realize the doctrine of Pope's Universal Prayer ; and extend the right hand of fellowship to the worshippers at the Mosque, and to the votaries of Brama.

Such, then, is the importance, direct and relative, of this point of doctrine, that Jesus Christ is truly God ; that in his person there subsisted when he was on earth, and still subsists, a union of the Divine and human natures.

I shall conclude these extracts by another from Dr. Dwight, in which he states some very important practical inferences from the doctrine established in the preceding pages.

From these observations it is evident,
1st, That those who trust in the expiation of Christ, will certainly inherit the favour of God.

In the text (Rom. iii. 24.) it is said, that “ God set forth Christ as a propitiation for sin, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness ; that he may be just, when justifying him that

believeth in Jesus. The end for which Christ was set forth as a propitiation, is, that God, consistently with justice, may justify those who believe in Christ. The peculiar and essential nature of the faith of such, as believe in Jesus, is in one important particular exactly defined, also, in the text, when it is styled "faith in his blood:" the faith through which alone he is exhibited in the text as becoming a propitiation to men. This faith, or as I shall take the liberty to call it, trust, or confidence, (for such I hope hereafter to show it to be,) is not, indeed, nor is it here asserted to be, faith in the atonement only; but it is faith in the atonement pre-eminently. We are required to believe in the whole character, and in all the offices of Christ; but we are required, peculiarly, to believe in him, as the great propitiatory sacrifice for sin. Every one, who is the subject of this faith, the real, and only means by which we become interested in this propitiation, is amply exhibited in the text as entitled to justification.

That every such believer will certainly inherit the favour of God cannot be rationally doubted. While he was yet a sinner, condemned and ruined, God, moved by his infinite benevolence, sent into this world his beloved Son, to become incarnate; to become a subject of his law, and a substitute for mankind; to lead a life of humiliation; and to die the accursed death of the cross; that he might redeem such sinners from the curse of the law; from a guilty

character, and the endless miseries of devouring fire. The condition, proposed by himself, on which we become entitled to the blessings of this redemption, are all summed up in this single phrase, "Faith in Christ," and pre-eminently in his atonement. This condition the believer has performed; and is, therefore, entitled to these blessings. His title is secured to him by the covenant of redemption, by the immutable promise of God to him, by the glory and excellency of Christ's mediation, and by that amazing and immense purpose of infinite love, which proposed, and accomplished, all the parts of this wonderful work. Who can doubt for a moment, that He who proposed, He who accomplished, this astonishing design, will go on to accomplish every thing which it draws in its train? "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not, with him also, freely give us all things?" Can any thing be too dear to be given to those, for whom Christ was given? Can any thing be too great to be expected by those, who are united to the Son of God, as "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones;" who are become his seed in the everlasting covenant; and to whom, unasked, he has, from his own overflowing goodness, given "the glory which he had with the Father before ever the world was?"

Let every believer, then, be completely assured, that his cause is safe in the hands of God. "He has chosen the good part, and it

shall never be taken from him." He, who has begun to befriend him in this infinite concern, "will never leave him nor forsake him." "All the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. Though he fall, yet shall he rise again; and his mercy God will not utterly take from him." In the seed, sown in his heart, there is a blessing; the beginning of immortal life. Cold and wintry as is the climate, beneath which it has sprung; unkind and barren as is the soil in which it grows; doubtful and fading as we often see its progress, it cannot die. The hand that planted it will cultivate it with unceasing care, and will speedily remove it to a happier region, where it will flourish and blossom, and bear fruit for ever. "I am persuaded," says St. Paul, "that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

2dly, It is equally evident, that those who reject the atonement of Christ, are without any hope of the divine favour.

The favour of God is proffered to the inhabitants of this world through Christ alone; and those only are promised an interest in it who cordially believe in him as the expiation of sin. Had there been any other condition upon which this glorious blessing could be communicated, the same benevolence which planned and accomplished our redemption, would, undoubt-

edly, have communicated it to us. No such communication has, however, been made. On the contrary, it is often declared in the most explicit language, that "he who believeth not shall be damned."

Even if the Scriptures had been silent, and no such awful declarations had been found in them, the nature of the subject holds out the strongest discouragement to every presumption of this kind. After such amazing efforts, made on the part of God, to bring mankind back from a state of rebellion, and to restore them to virtue and happiness, it cannot but be believed, that their obstinate continuance in sin must be regarded by him with supreme abhorrence. His law condemned them, for their original apostasy, to final ruin. To the guilt of this apostasy, unatoned, unrepented of, and therefore remaining in all its enormity, they, in this case, add the peculiar guilt of rejecting the singular, the eminently divine goodness of God manifested in this wonderful provision for their recovery. In what manner they could more contemptuously despise the divine character, in what manner they could more insolently affront the divine mercy, it is beyond my power to conceive. No other offer can be so kind; no other blessing so great; no other display of the divine character, of which we can form a conception, so lovely. The ingratitude, therefore, is wonderful; the insolence amazing; the guilt incomprehensible. "If," then, "the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall these unbeliev-

ing, ungodly sinners appear?" If it be a fearful thing for all men, for heathen and for Mahomedans "to fall into the hands of the living God;" what must it be for these men, to whom Christ is offered freely, daily, and alway; who sit, from the cradle to the grave, under the noon-day light of the Gospel, and bask, through life, in the beams of the Sun of righteousness?

Whence do these persons derive their hope? From their character? That could not save them under the law. It is the very guilt for which they are condemned. From their repentance? They exercise none. Even if they did, it could never be accepted. A perfect repentance, as has been heretofore proved, cannot become an expiation for sin. But such repentance was never exhibited by men. Their repentance is not even a sorrow for sin. On the contrary, it is the mere dread of danger; a mere terrified expectation of punishment. Who, however abandoned, does not, at times, experience such repentance as this? Whoever dreamed that the dread of death ought to excuse the felon from the gibbet?

Let every unbeliever then, tremble at the approach of the judgment. Let him no longer say to himself, "Peace; peace; when sudden destruction is coming upon him." Let him "turn to the strong hold, while he is yet a prisoner of hope." Let him turn to the Lord with all the heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and

repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth, if he will turn and repent, and leave a blessing behind him.

3dly, It is evident, from the observations made in these discourses, that mankind are infinitely indebted to Christ for expiating their sins.

Christ by his atonement has redeemed mankind from under the curse of the law. The sufferings to which they were doomed by this curse were endless sufferings. Without an expiation, a deliverance from these sufferings was impossible. Equally impossible was it for any other person, beside Christ, to make an expiation. From mere compassion to our ruined world he undertook the arduous labour of delivering us from these stupendous sufferings; and accomplished it at the expense of his own blood. Infinitely rich, for our sakes he became poor, that we through him might become rich. For him we had done nothing, and were disposed to do nothing. For us, influenced by his own overflowing goodness, he did all things. He taught us, as our prophet, all things pertaining to life and godliness. He lived before us, as our example; he died for us as our propitiation; he rose from the dead as the earnest of our resurrection to endless life. He entered heaven as our forerunner; he assumed the throne of the universe as our ruler, protector, and benefactor. At the end of the world he will appear as our judge and rewarder; and will conduct to the mansions of eternal life all

those who have cordially accepted of his mediation ; and will there, throughout interminable ages, feed them with living bread, and lead them to fountains of living waters. To the obligations conferred by such a benefactor what limits can be set? Our deliverance from sin and sorrow is a boundless good ; our introduction to endless virtue and happiness is a boundless good. But of all this good the atonement of Christ is the foundation, the procuring cause, the commencement, and the security. “ Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.” Such is the everlasting song, to which the four living creatures in the heavens subjoin their unceasing Amen.

With this glorious subject in our view, can we fail to be astonished at the manner in which the Saviour of the world is treated by multitudes of those whom he came to redeem? By what multitudes is he regarded with cold-hearted unbelief, and stupid indifference? By what multitudes, with open opposition and avowed hostility? By what multitudes, with shameless contempt, insolent sneers, and impudent ridicule? How often is his glorious name profaned, and blasphemed, by those whom he died to save from endless perdition? How many miserable wretches, tottering on the brink of eternal ruin, while in the house of God, while in this house, and while his agonies endured for them, are resounding in their ears, quietly compose them-

selves to sleep, or busily employ themselves in whispering, amusement, and mirth; forgetful that they have souls to be saved or lost; and destitute of a wish to be interested in the Saviour? Had Christ been as regardless of these miserable beings as they are of him, nay, as they are of themselves, what would have become of them in the day of wrath? What will become of them in that dreadful day, if they continue to treat Christ as they have treated him hitherto?

4thly, It is evident from these observations, that the Gospel alone furnishes a consistent scheme of salvation to mankind.

The Gospel takes man, where it finds him, in a state of sin and ruin, condemned by the law of God to final perdition, and incapable of justification by his own righteousness. In this situation, it announces to him a Saviour, divinely great and glorious, divinely excellent and lovely, assuming his nature, to become an expiation for his sins; revealing to him the way of reconciliation to God, and inviting him to enter it and be saved. The acceptance of this expiation it announces from the mouth of God himself. The terms on which we may be reconciled, it discloses with exact precision and perfect clearness; so that he who runs may read; so that beggars and children may understand and accept them. Faith in the Redeemer, repentance towards God, and holiness of character involve them all. They are terms, reasonable in themselves, easy to us, and pro-

ductive of incomprehensible good to all who embrace them. To overcome the stubbornness of our hearts, Christ has commissioned the SPIRIT OF GRACE to sanctify us for himself; to draw us with the cords of his love; to guide us with his wisdom; to uphold us with his power; and to conduct us under his kind providence to the heavens. In this scheme is contained all that we need, and all that we can rationally desire. The way of salvation is here become a highway, and way-faring men, though fools, need not err therein.

The religion of the Gospel is a religion designed for sinners. By the expiation of Christ it opens the brazen door, which was for ever barred against their return. Here the supreme, and otherwise immoveable, obstacle to the acceptance of sinners is taken away. If sinners were to be accepted, it was not possible that this cup should pass from Christ. The next great obstacle in the way of their acceptance is found in their unholy, disobedient hearts, prone to evil only, and continually; and the next, their perpetual exposure to backsliding, and to falling finally away. These obstacles, immoveable, also, by any means on this side of heaven, the spirit of grace by his most merciful interference in our behalf entirely removes. Man, therefore, in the Gospel finds his return from apostasy made possible, made easy, made certain, actually begun; steadily carried on in the present world, and finally completed in the world to come.

But no other scheme of religion presents to us even plausible means of removing these difficulties. Natural religion, to which infidels persuade us to betake ourselves for safety, does not even promise us a return to God. Natural religion is the religion of law; of that law which in the only legal language declares to us, "Do these things, and thou shalt live; but the soul that sinneth shall die." These things, the things specified in the requisitions of the law, we have not done, and therefore cannot live. We have sinned, and therefore must die. It has been formerly shown, that the law knows no condition of acceptance, or justification, but obedience. Concerning repentance, faith, forgiveness, and reconciliation, concerning the sinner's return to God, and his admission to immortal life, the law is silent. Its only sentence, pronounced on those who disobey, is a sentence of final condemnation.

Whatever we may suppose the law to be, we have disobeyed its precepts. Nothing has been ever devised or received by man as a law of God, which all men have not disobeyed. Infidels cannot devise such a law as they will dare to call a law of God, and publish to men under this title, which they themselves, and all other men have not often disobeyed. From the very nature of law, a nature inseparable from its existence as a law, disobedience to its precepts must be condemned; and, if nothing interfere to preserve the offender from punishment, he must of necessity suffer. To what degree, in what modes, through what extent,

these sufferings will reach, the infidel cannot conjecture. To his anguish no end appears. Of such an end no arguments can be furnished by his mind; no tidings have reached his ear, and no hopes can rationally arise in his heart. Death, with all the gloomy scenes attendant upon a dying-bed, is to him merely the commencement of doubt, fear, and sorrow. The grave, to him, is the entrance into a world of absolute and eternal darkness. That world, hung round with fear, amazement, and despair, overcast with midnight, melancholy with solitude, desolate of every hope of real good, opens to him through the dreary passage of the grave*.

* Some of the thoughts that occur here, are presented in a more expanded form in a very eloquent passage by Dr. Dwight, on the doctrine of the resurrection, the insertion of which here cannot fail to be gratifying to the reader.—“No doctrine devised by philosophy concerning man, is so sublime, so delightful, so fitted to furnish consolation and hope, to beings whose life in this world is a moment, and whose end is the grave. To this dark and desolate habitation, man, by the twilight of nature, looks forward in despair as his final home. All who have gone before him have pointed their feet to its silent chambers; and not one of them returned to announce that an opening has been discovered from their dreary residence to some other more lightsome and more desirable region. His own feet daily tread the same melancholy path. As he draws nigh, he surveys its prison walls, and sees them unassailable by force, and insurmountable by skill. No lamp illumines the midnight within. No crevice opens to the eye a glimpse of the regions which lie beyond. In absolute despair he calls upon Philosophy to cheer his drooping mind; but he calls in vain.

Beyond this entrance he sees nothing, he knows nothing, he can conjecture nothing, but what must fill his heart with alarm, and make his death-bed a couch of thorns. With a suspense, scarcely less terrible than the miseries of damnation itself, his soul lingers over the vast and desolate abyss; when, compelled by an unseen and irresistible hand, it plunges into this uncertain and irreversible doom, to learn by experience what is the measure of woe destined to reward those "who obey not God," and reject the salvation proffered by his Son.

In such a situation, what man, not yet lost to sense and thought, not yet convinced that he has committed the sin which cannot be forgiven, would not hail with transport the dawn of the gospel—the clear rising of the Sun of Righteousness, to illumine his path through this melancholy world, to dispel the darkness of the grave, to shed a benevolent light upon the entrance into eternity, and brighten his passage to the heavens.

She has no consolations for herself, and can therefore administer none to *him*. 'Here,' she coldly and sullenly cries, 'is the end of man. From nothing he sprang; to nothing he returns. All that remains of him is the dust which here mingles with its native earth.'

"At this sullen moment of despair Revelation approaches, and with a command at once awful and delightful, exclaims, *Lazarus, come forth!* In a moment the earth heaves, the tomb discloses, and a form bright as the sun, and arrayed in immortality, rises from the earth, and stretching its wings towards heaven, loses itself from the astonished sight."

APPENDIX.

The following pages of this small volume cannot be better occupied, or in a manner more suited to the design of the whole, than by inserting, as an appendix, the well-known and very eloquent Sermon of M'Laurin on Glorifying in the Cross of Christ, very partially abridged. The text is, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world."

After a few introductory observations, the author thus proceeds:—

The intended ground of the discourse being the first clause, the doctrine to be insisted on is this:—

' That the cross of Christ affords sinners matter of glorying above all other things; yea, that it is in a manner the only thing they should glory in. The whole humiliation of Christ, and particularly his death for the sake of sinners, is an object that has such incompa-

rable glory in it, that it becomes us to have the most honourable and exalted thoughts of it.'

In discoursing on this subject, it will be proper first to consider briefly, what it is to glory in any object ; and then, what ground of glorying we have in this blessed object, proposed in the text.

To glory in any object includes these two things,—first, a high esteem of it, and then some concern in it. We do not glory in the things we are interested in, unless we esteem them ; nor in the things we admire and esteem, unless we are some way interested in them. But although all professing Christians are some way concerned to glory in the cross of Christ, because of their outward relation to him, by their baptismal covenant, and because the blessed fruits of his cross are both plainly revealed, and freely offered to them ; yet it is those only who have sincerely embraced those offers, that can truly glory in that object. Yet what is their privilege, is the duty of all ; all should be exhorted to glory in this object, and to have a high esteem of it, because of its excellency in itself ; to fix their hearts in it by faith, because it is offered to them ; to show their esteem of it, by seeking an interest in it ; and having a due esteem of it, and obtained an interest in it, to study a frame of habitual triumph in it. But the nature of this happy frame of mind, is best understood by considering the glory of the object of it.

A king which the world admires, is one of

extensive power, with numerous armies, a golden crown and sceptre, a throne of state, magnificent palaces, sumptuous feasts, many attendants of high rank ; immense treasures to enrich them with, and various posts of honour to prefer them to.

Here was the reverse of all this : for a crown of gold, a crown of thorns ; for a sceptre, a reed put in his hand in derision ; for a throne, a cross ; instead of palaces, not a place to lay his head in ; instead of sumptuous feasts to others, oftentimes hungry and thirsty himself ; instead of great attendants, a company of poor fishermen ; instead of treasures to give them, not money enough to pay tribute without working a miracle ; and the preferment offered them, was to give each of them his cross to bear. In all things, the reverse of worldly greatness from first to last ; a manger for a cradle at his birth ; not a place to lay his head sometimes in his life, nor a grave of his own at his death.

Here unbelief frets and murmurs, and asks, Where is all the glory that is so much extolled ? For discovering this, faith needs only look through that thin veil of flesh ; and under that low disguise, appears the Lord of glory, the King of kings, the Lord of hosts, strong and mighty, (Psal. xxiv. 8.) the Lord mighty in battle ; the heavens his throne, the earth his footstool, the light his garments, the clouds his chariots, the thunder his voice, his strength omnipotence, his riches all-sufficiency, his glo-

ry infinite, his retinue the hosts of heaven, and the excellent ones of the earth, on whom he bestows riches unsearchable, an inheritance incorruptible, banquets of everlasting joys, and preferments of immortal honour, making them kings and priests unto God, conquerors, yea, and more than conquerors, children of God, and mystically one with himself.

Here appears something incomparably above all worldly glory, though under a mean disguise. But the objection is still against that disguise: yet even that disguise, upon due consideration, will appear to be so glorious, that its very meanness is honourable. It was a glorious disguise, because the designs and effects of it are so: if he suffered shame, poverty, pain, sorrows, and death, for a time, it was that we might not suffer these things for ever. That meanness therefore was glorious, because it was subservient unto an infinitely glorious design of love and mercy.

It was subservient more ways than one; it satisfied the penalty of the law, it put unspeakable honour on the commandments of it. It was a part of Christ's design to make holiness (that is, obedience to the law) so honourable, that every thing else should be contemptible in comparison of it. Love of worldly greatness is one of the principal hindrances of it. We did not need the example of Christ to commend earthly grandeur to us, but very much to reconcile us to the contrary, and to make us esteem holiness, though accompanied

with meanness : Christ's low state was an excellent mean for this end. There was therefore greatness even in his meanness. Other men are honourable by their station, but Christ's station was made honourable by him : he has made poverty and meanness, joined with holiness, to be a state of dignity.

Thus Christ's outward meanness, that disguised his real greatness, was in itself glorious, because of the design of it. Yet that meanness did not wholly becloud it ; many beams of glory shone through it.

His birth was mean on earth below ; but it was celebrated with hallelujahs by the heavenly host in the air above : he had a poor lodging ; but a star lighted visitants to it from distant countries. Never prince had such visitants so conducted. He had not the magnificent equipage that other kings have ; but he was attended with multitudes of patients, seeking and obtaining healing of soul and body : that was more true greatness than if he had been attended with crowds of princes. He made the dumb that attended him sing his praises, and the lame to leap for joy, the deaf to hear his wonders, and the blind to see his glory. He had no guard of soldiers, nor magnificent retinue of servants ; but, as the centurion, that had both, acknowledged, health and sickness, life and death, took orders from him. Even the winds and storms, which no earthly power can control, obeyed him ; and death and the grave durst not refuse to deliver up

their prey when he demanded it. He did not walk upon tapestry, but when he walked on the sea, the waters supported him. All parts of the creation, excepting sinful men, honoured him as their Creator. He kept no treasure, but when he had occasion for money, the sea sent it to him in the mouth of a fish. He had no barns nor corn-fields, but when he inclined to make a feast, a few loaves covered a sufficient table for many thousands. None of all the monarchs of the world ever gave such entertainment. By these, and many such things, the Redeemer's glory shone through his meanness, in the several parts of his life. Nor was it wholly clouded at his death. He had not indeed that fantastic equipage of sorrow that other great persons have on such occasions ; but the frame of nature solemnized the death of its author ; heaven and earth were mourners ; the sun was clad in black ; and if the inhabitants of the earth were unmoved, the earth itself trembled under the awful load. There were few to pay the Jewish compliment of rending their garments ; but the rocks were not so insensible ; they rent their bowels. He had not a grave of his own, but other men's graves opened to him. Death and the grave might be proud of such a tenant in their territories ; but he came not there as a subject, but as an invader, a conqueror : it was then the king of terrors lost his sting, and on the third day the Prince of Life triumphed over him, spoiling death and the grave. But this

last particular belongs to Christ's exaltation ; the other instances show a part of the glory of his humiliation, but it is a small part of it.

The glory of the cross of Christ, which we are chiefly to esteem, is the glory of God's infinite perfections displayed in the work of redemption ; as the apostle expresses it, " The glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus," 2 Cor. iv. 6. " Even of Christ crucified," 1 Cor. ii. 2. It is this which makes any other object glorious, according as it manifests more or less of the perfections of God. This is what makes the works of creation so glorious ; " The heavens declare God's glory, and the firmament his handy-work." And we are inexcusable for not taking more pains to contemplate God's perfections in them, his almighty power, and incomprehensible wisdom, and particularly his infinite goodness. But the effects of the Divine goodness, in the works of creation, are only temporal favours ; the favours purchased to us by the cross of Christ are eternal. Besides, although the works of creation plainly show that God is in himself good ; yet they also show that God is just, and that he is displeased with us for our sins ; nor do they point out to us the way how we may be reconciled to him. They publish the Creator's glory ; they publish at the same time his laws, and our obligations to obey them. Our consciences tell us we have neglected these obligations, violated these laws, and consequently incurred the Lawgiver's displeasure. His works declaring

his glory, show that in his favour is life, and consequently that in his displeasure is death and ruin; yea, they lay us in some measure under his displeasure already. Why else do natural causes give so much trouble in life, and pain in death? From all quarters, the works of God revenge the quarrel of his broken law. They give these frail bodies subsistence for a time, but it is a subsistence embittered with many vexations, and at last they crush them, and dissolve them in dust.

The face of nature, then, is glorious in itself, but it is overcast with a gloom of terror to us: it shows the glory of the Judge to the criminal, the glory of the offended Sovereign to the guilty rebel. This is not the way to give comfort and relief to a criminal; it is not the way to make him glory and triumph. Accordingly, the enemies of the cross of Christ, who refuse to know God otherwise than by the works of nature, are so far from glorying in the hopes of enjoying God in heaven, that they renounce all those great expectations, and generally deny that there is any such blessedness to be had. Conscience tells us, we are rebels against God; and nature does not show how such rebels may recover his favour; how, in such a well-ordered government as the divine government must be, the righteous Judge and Lawgiver may be glorified, and the criminal escape,—much less, how the Judge may be glorified, and the criminal obtain glory likewise.

The language of nature, though it be plain

and loud in proclaiming the glory of the Creator, yet it is dark and intricate as to his inclination towards guilty creatures. It neither assures peremptorily that we are in a state of despair, nor gives sure footing for our hopes. If we are favourites, whence so many troubles? If we are hopeless criminals, whence so many favours? Nature shows God's glory, and our shame; his law our duty, and consequently our danger: but about the way of escape, it is silent and dumb. It affords many motives for exciting desires after God; but it shows not the way to get these desires satisfied. Here in the text is an object which gives us better intelligence. It directs us not merely to seek by feeling in the dark (Acts xvii. 27.) if haply we may find, but to seek him so as certainly to find him. Unlikely doctrine to a carnal mind;—that there should be more of God's glory manifested to us in the face of Christ crucified, than in the face of heaven and earth:—the face of Christ, in which sense discovers nothing but marks of pain and disgrace; that bloated, mangled visage, red with gore, covered with marks of scorn, swelled with strokes, and pale with death, that would be the last object in which the carnal mind would seek to see the glory of the God of life; a visage clouded with the horror of death, it would, with more pleasure and admiration, view the same face when transfigured, and shining like the sun in its strength. Divine glory shone indeed then in a bright

manner in that face on the mount ; but not so brightly as on Mount Calvary : this was the more glorious transfiguration of the two. Though all the light in the world, in the sun and stars, were collected together into one stupendous mass of light, it would be but darkness to the glory of this seemingly dark and melancholy object : for it is here, as the apostle expresses it, 2 Cor. iii. 18, “ We all, as with open face, may behold the glory of God.”

Here shines spotless justice, incomprehensible wisdom, and infinite love all at once : none of them darkens or eclipses the other ; every one of them gives a lustre to the rest. They mingle their beams, and shine with united eternal splendour : the just Judge, the merciful Father, and the wise Governor. No other object gives such a display of all these perfections ; yea, all the objects we know, give not such a display of any one of them. No where does justice appear so awful, mercy so amiable, or wisdom so profound.

By the infinite dignity of Christ's person, his cross gives more honour and glory to the law and justice of God, than all the other sufferings that ever were, or will be endured in the world. When the apostle is speaking to the Romans of the gospel, he does not tell them only of God's mercy, but also of his justice revealed by it, Rom. i. 18. God's wrath against the unrighteousness of men, is chiefly revealed by the righteousness and sufferings of Christ. The Lord was pleased for his righteousness'

sake, Isa. xlii. 21. Both by requiring and appointing that righteousness, he magnified the law, and made it honourable. And though that righteousness consists in obedience and sufferings which continue for a time, yet since the remembrance of them will continue for ever, the cross of Christ may be said to give eternal majesty and honour to that law which it satisfied, that awful law by which the universe (which is God's kingdom) is governed, to which the principalities and powers of heaven are subject ; that law, which, in condemning sin, banished the devil and his angels from heaven, our first parents from paradise, and peace from the earth. Considering, therefore, that God is the Judge and Lawgiver of the world, it is plain that his glory shines with unspeakable brightness in the cross of Christ, as the punishment of sin. But this is the very thing that hinders the lovers of sin from acknowledging the glory of the cross, because it shows so much of God's hatred of what they love. It would be useful for removing such prejudices, to consider, that though Christ's sacrifice shows the punishment of sin, yet if we embrace that sacrifice, it only *shows* it to us ; it takes it off our hands, it leaves us no more to do with it. And surely the beholding our danger, when we behold it as prevented, serves rather to increase than lessen our joy : by seeing the greatness of our danger, we see the greatness of our deliverance. The cross of

Christ displays the glory of infinite justice, but not of justice only.

Here shines chiefly the glory of infinite mercy. Nothing in the world more lovely or glorious, than love and goodness itself, and this is the greatest instance of it that can be conceived. God's goodness appears in all his works: this is a principal part of the glory of the creation. We are taught to consider this lower world as a convenient habitation built for man to dwell in; but, to allude to the apostle's expression, Heb. iii. 3. This gift we are speaking of, should be accounted more worthy of honour than the world, "in as much as he who hath built the house, hath more honour than the house."

When God gave us his Son, he gave us an infinitely greater gift than the world: the Creator is infinitely more glorious than the creature, and the Son of God is the Creator of all things. God can make innumerable worlds by the word of his mouth: he has but one only Son, and he spared not his only Son, but gave him to the death of the cross for us all.

God's love to his people is from everlasting to everlasting: but from everlasting to everlasting there is no manifestation of it known, or conceiveable by us, that can be compared to this. The light of the sun is always the same, but it shines brightest to us at noon: the cross of Christ was the noon-tide of everlasting love, the meridian splendour of eternal mercy: there were many bright manifestations of the same

love before, but they were like the light of the morning that shines more and more unto the perfect day; and that perfect day was when Christ was on the cross, when darkness covered all the land.

Comparisons can give but a very imperfect view of this love which passeth knowledge. Though we should suppose all the love of all the men that ever were, or shall be on the earth, and all the love of the angels in heaven, united in one heart, it would be but a cold heart to that which was pierced with the soldier's spear. The Jews saw but blood and water, but faith can discern a bright ocean of eternal love flowing out of these wounds. We may have some impression of the glory of it, by considering its effects: we should consider all the spiritual and eternal blessings, received by God's people for four thousand years before Christ was crucified, or that have been received since, or that will be received till the consummation of all things; all the deliverances from eternal misery; all the oceans of joy in heaven; the rivers of water of life, to be enjoyed to all eternity by multitudes as the sand of the sea-shore;—we should consider all these blessings as flowing from that love that was displayed in the cross of Christ.

Here shines also the glory of the incomprehensible wisdom of God, which consists in promoting the best ends by the fittest means. The ends of the cross are best in themselves, and the best for us that can be conceived,—the

glory of God, and the good of man; and the means by which it advances these ends are so fit and suitable, that the infinite depth of contrivance in them will be the admiration of the universe to eternity.

It is an easy thing to conceive the glory of the Creator manifested in the good of an innocent creature; but the glory of the righteous Judge, manifested in the good of the guilty criminal, is the peculiar mysterious wisdom of the cross. It is easy to conceive God's righteousness declared in the punishment of sins: the cross alone "declares his righteousness in the remission of sins," Rom. iii. 25. It magnifies justice in the way of pardoning sin, and mercy in the way of punishing it. It shows justice more awful than if mercy had been excluded, and mercy more amiable than if justice had been dispensed with. "It magnifies the law, and makes it honourable," Isa. xlii. 21. It magnifies the criminal who broke the law, and the respect put upon the law makes him honourable likewise, 1 Cor. ii. 7. Yea, this is so contrived, that every honour done to the criminal is an honour done to the law, and all the respect put upon the law puts respect also on the criminal; for every blessing the sinner receives is for the sake of obedience and satisfaction made to the law, not by himself, but by another, who could put infinitely greater dignity on the law; and the satisfaction of that other for the sinner, puts the greatest dignity on him that he is capable of. Both the law

and the sinner may “glory in the cross of Christ.” Both of them receive eternal honour and glory by it.

The glories that are found separately in the other works of God, are found united here. The joys of heaven glorify God’s goodness, the pains of hell glorify his justice; the cross of Christ glorifies both of them in a more remarkable manner than heaven or hell glorifies either of them. There is more remarkable honour done to the justice of God by the sufferings of Christ, than by the torments of devils; and there is a more remarkable display of the goodness of God, in the redemption of sinners, than in the joy of angels: so that we can conceive no object, in which we can discover such manifold wisdom, or so deep contrivance, for advancing the glory of God.

The like may be said of its contrivance for the good of man. It heals all his diseases, it pardons all his sins, Psalm ciii. It is the sacrifice that removes the guilt of sin; it is the motive that removes the love of sin; it mortifies sin, and expiates it. It atones for disobedience, it excites to obedience; it purchases strength for obedience, it makes obedience practicable, it makes it delightful, it makes it acceptable, it makes it in a manner unavoidable, it constrains to it, 2 Cor. v. 14. It is not only the motive to obedience, but the pattern of it. It satisfies the curse of the law, and fulfils the commands of it. Love is the fulfilling of the law, the sum of which is the love of

God and of our neighbour. The cross of Christ is the highest instance of both. Christ's sufferings are to be considered as actions. Never action gave such glory to God, never action did such good to man. And it is the way to show our love to God and man, by promoting the glory of the one, and the good of the other.

Thus the sufferings of Christ teach us our duty, by that love whence they flowed, and that good for which they were designed: but they teach us not only by the design of them, but also by the manner of his undergoing them. Submission to God, and forgiveness of our enemies, are two of the most difficult duties: the former is one of the chief expressions of love to God, and the latter of love to man: but the highest submission is, when a person submits to suffering, though free of guilt; and the highest forgiveness is, to forgive our murderers, especially if the murderers were persons who were obliged to us; as if a person not only should forgive them who took away his life, even though they owed him their own life, but also desire others to forgive them, pray for them, and as much as possible excuse them. This was the manner of Christ's bearing his sufferings: "Father, thy will be done;" and, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Thus we see how fit a mean the cross is for promoting the best ends for justification and sanctification. It would be too long to insist here in showing its manifold fitness, for pro-

moting also joy and peace here, and everlasting happiness hereafter ; for, no doubt, it will be a great part of the future happiness to remember the way it was purchased, and to see the Lamb that was slain at the right hand of him that gave him for that end. The things already adduced shew that the incomprehensible wisdom of God is gloriously displayed in the cross of Christ, because it hath such amazing contrivance in it for advancing the good of man, as well as the glory of God ; for that is the design of it, to shew the glory of God, and good-will towards man.

But it is not only the glory of divine wisdom that shines in this blessed object, but also the glory of divine power. This to them who know not Christ is no small paradox ; but to them who believe, “ Christ crucified, is the wisdom of God, and the power of God,” 1 Cor. i. 24. The Jews thought Christ’s crucifixion a demonstration of his want of power : hence they upbraided him, that he who wrought so many miracles, suffered himself to hang on the cross : but this itself was the greatest miracle of all. They asked, Why he who saved others saved not himself ? They named the reason without taking heed to it : that was the very reason why at that time he saved not himself, because he saved others ; because he was willing and able to save others. The motive of his enduring the cross was powerful,—divine love stronger than death ; the fruits of it powerful,—divine grace, the power of God to

salvation, (Rom. i. 16,) making new creatures, raising souls from the dead: these are acts of Omnipotence. We are ready to admire chiefly the power of God in the visible world, but the soul of man is a far nobler creature than it. We justly admire the power of the Creator in the motion of the heavenly bodies, but the motion of souls towards God as their centre is far more glorious, the effects of the same power far more eminent, and far more lasting.

The wounds of Christ seemed effects of weakness; but it is easy to observe incomparable strength appearing in them. We should consider what it was that bruised him; "He was bruised for our iniquities." The Scripture represents them (Isa. liii.) as a great burden; and describes us all lying helpless under it, as a people laden with iniquity. Christ bore our sins in his own body on the tree; he bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows; not these we feel here only, but those we deserved to feel hereafter. We should consider who laid this burden on him; "The Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all," Isa. liii. 6. We might well say with Cain, our punishment was more than we were able to bear: this might be said to every one of us apart; but it was not the sins of one that he bore; he bore the sins of many, of multitudes as the sand on the sea-shore, and the sins of every one of them as numerous. This was the heaviest and most terrible weight in the world.

The curse of the law was a weight sufficient to crush a world. They who first brought it on themselves found it so. It sunk legions of angels, who excel in strength, when they had abused that strength against the law, from the heaven of heavens to the bottomless pit. The same weight that had crushed rebel angels, threatened man for joining with them. Before man could bear it; before any person could have his own proportion of it, it behoved, as it were, to be divided into numberless parcels. Man, after numberless ages, would have borne but a small part of it. "The wrath to come," would have been always wrath to come to all eternity: there would have been still infinitely more to bear. Christ only had strength to bear it all; to bear it all, in a manner, at once—to bear it all alone. None of the people were with him. Our burden and our help was laid on one who was mighty; and his bearing it, was a glorious manifestation of his might,—of the noblest kind of might,—that he was "mighty to save."

It is true, that load bruised him; but we would not be surprised at that, if we considered the dreadfulfulness of the shock. Could we conceive the weight of eternal justice, ready to fall down, like lightning, with violence upon a world of malefactors, and view that sacred body interposed betwixt the load of wrath from above and the heirs of wrath below, we would not wonder at these bruises—we would not despise them. We should consider the event,

had that wrath fallen lower ; had it met with no obstacle, it would have made havock of another kind ; this world would have been worse than a chaos, and been covered with the dismal effects of vindictive justice and divine righteous vengeance.

Although his sacred flesh was both mangled and marred with that dismal load, yet we should consider that it sustained it. Here was incomparable strength, that it sustained that shock which would have grinded mankind into powder ; and he sustained it (as was said before) alone. He let no part of it fall lower. They who take sanctuary under this blessed covert are so safe, that they have no more to do with that load of wrath but to look to it. John iii. 14.—

It is useful to observe the universal importance of this design : no part of the universe was unconcerned in it.

The glory of the Creator was eminently to be displayed, all the divine persons were to be gloriously manifested, the divine attributes to be magnified, the divine works and ways to be honoured ; the earth was to be redeemed, hell conquered, heaven purchased, the law to be magnified and established. Isa. xlii. 21. Its commandments to be fulfilled, its curse to be suffered, the law was to be satisfied, and the criminal that broke it be saved, and his tempter and accuser to be defeated ; the head of the old serpent was to be bruised, his works to be destroyed, and the principalities and

powers of darkness to be spoiled, and triumphed over openly, Col. ii. 15. The principalities and powers of heaven were to receive new matter of everlasting hallelujahs, and new companions to join in them ; the fallen angels were to lose their old subjects, and the blessed angels to receive new fellow-citizens. No wonder this is called the making a new heaven, and a new earth ; and even the face of hell was to be altered. Surely a more glorious design cannot be contrived ; and the more we consider it, the more we may see the greatness of the action that accomplished it.

As the design was great, the preparations were solemn. The stage of it was to be this earth ; it was chiefly concerned in it ; it was solemnly prepared for it. This is the view given us of the providences that preceded it ; they fitted the stage of the world, for the great event, in the fulness of time. If we saw clearly the whole chain of them, we would see how they pointed towards this as their centre, and how they contributed to honour it, or rather it reflected the greatest honour upon them. The prophecies recorded in Daniel, besides several others, are instances of this. They show how the great revolutions in the heathen world were subservient to this design, particularly the succession of the four monarchies represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream ; their rise and overthrow were subservient to the rise of this monarchy, never to be overthrown.

We see but a small part of the chain of pro-

vidence, and even that very darkly. But this, perhaps, is worth the observing briefly, that universal empire came gradually from the eastern to the western parts of the world, from the Assyrians and Persians, to the Greeks and Romans. By this means greater communication and correspondence than formerly was opened up between distant nations of the earth, from the rising to the setting of the sun. The kingdom, represented by the stone cut out of the mountain, was to extend to both, Dan. ii. 34, 35. However we think of this, it is certain, that if we saw the plot of providence unfolded, we would see these and other revolutions contributing to the fulness of times, and adjusting the world to that state and form of things, that was fittest for the Redeemer's appearance.

These were a part of the preparations for the work in view: but they were but a part of them: for all the sacrifices offered every morning and evening for so many ages were preparations for it, and shadows of it. The same may be said of other figures and types. The church of God, for four thousand years, waited with longing looks for this salvation of the Lord. They were refreshed with the sacrifices that prefigured it. The heathens themselves had their sacrifices. They had sinfully lost the tradition of the true religion and the Messiah, handed down from Noah, yet Providence ordered it so, that they did not wholly lose the rite of sacrificing. There is reason to acknow-

ledge a particular providence preserving tradition in this point ; for how otherwise could it enter into men's heads, to serve their gods by sacrificing their beasts ? It was useful that the world should not be entirely unacquainted with the notion of a sacrifice ; the substitution of the innocent in the room of the guilty, all pointed towards this great oblation which was to make all others to cease. The predictions of the prophets in different ages, from Moses to Malachi, were also preparations for this great event. John the Baptist appeared as the morning star, the harbinger of the Day-spring from on high. It was his peculiar office to prepare the way of the Lord before him. The evidence of the prophecies was bright ; the Jews saw the time approaching ; their expectations were big. Counterfeit Messiahs took advantage of it ; and not only the Jews, but even the Heathens, probably by report from them, had a notion of an incomparably great person who was to appear about that time. These, besides many other great things, serve to show what glorious preparations and pomp went before the great work we are speaking of.

Here it may perhaps occur to some, that it is strange, an action that had such great preparations before it happened, was so little observed when it did happen. Strictly speaking, this was not true. It was not much noticed indeed among blind and ignorant men ; this was foretold ; but it had a noble theatre, the whole universe were in effect spectators of it.

The scripture teacheth us to reflect on this ; particularly, to consider the principalities and powers in heavenly places, as attentive onlookers on this glorious performance. We may infer this, (besides other scriptures,) from Eph. iii. 10.

These morning-stars shouted for joy, and sung together at the old creation, Job xxxviii. 7. This was a new creation to sing at, a more amazing spectacle than the old. In that, the Son of God acted in the form of God ; now, he was to act in the low form of a servant. Nor was that the lowest part of it ; he was to suffer in the form of a criminal ; the Judge in the form of a malefactor ; the Lawgiver in the room of the rebel. The creation was a mean theatre for so great an event, and the noblest creatures unworthy judges of such an incomprehensible performance ; its true glory was the approbation of its infinite contriver, and that he, at whose command it was done, was fully well pleased with it.

Yet to us, on whose nature's example has so much influence, it may be useful to consider that honourable crowd of admirers and spectators that this performance had, and to reflect how heaven beheld with veneration, what was treated on earth with contempt ; it was a large theatre, multitudes as sand on the sea-shore, a glorious company. In Scripture, angels, in comparison of men, are called gods. We are not sensible of their glory, which struck prophets almost dead with fear, and tempted an

apostle to idolatry ; but these, when the first-begotten is brought into the world, (Heb. i. 6, compared with Psalm xcvi. 7,) all these gods are commanded to worship him ; the place of Scripture where angels are called gods, is the place where they are commanded to worship Christ. And according to the same apostle, Heb. i. 6, it was a special time of his receiving this glory from the hosts of heaven, when his glory was to be veiled among the inhabitants of the earth. It is evident that they were spectators of all that he did in that state, and no doubt they were attentive spectators ; they desired to look, as it were, with out-stretched necks into these things, 1 Pet. i. 12, nor could they be unconcerned spectators. They were on divers accounts interested in it. They did not need a redemption themselves, but they delighted in ours. They loved Christ, and they loved his people. Their love interested them in the glory of the one and the other. All we know of their work and office, as Luther expresses it, is to sing in heaven, and minister on earth ; *our redemption* gave occasion for both ; they sang for joy when it began at Christ's birth, Luke ii. 13, they went with gladness on messages of it beforehand, to the prophets, and to the virgin Mary. They fed Christ in the desert, they attended him in his agony, and at his resurrection, and accompanied him at his ascension. They were concerned to look into these things in time, that were to be remembered to all eternity ; and into that performance

on earth that was to be the matter of eternal Hallelujahs in heaven.

It should not, therefore, hinder our esteem of this great work, that the great men on earth took no notice of it. They were but mean, blind, ignorant, vulgar, compared to these powers and thrones just now mentioned, who beheld it with veneration. It is no disparagement to an excellent performance, that it is not admired by ignorant persons who do not understand it.

The principalities in heaven understood and therefore admired; nor were the principalities and powers of darkness wholly ignorant of it. Their example should not be a pattern to us; but, what they beheld with anguish, we should behold with transport. Their plot was to make the earth, if possible, a province of hell; they had heard of that glorious counterplot; they were alarmed at the harbingers of it; they looked on, and saw their plot step by step defeated, and the projects of eternal mercy going on. All the universe, therefore, were interested on-lookers at this blessed undertaking. Heaven looked on with joy, and hell with terror, to observe the event of an enterprise that was contrived from everlasting, expected since the fall of man, and that was to be celebrated to all eternity.

Thus we have before us several things that shew the glory of the performance in view: The design of universal importance; the preparation, incomparably solemn; a company of

the most honourable attentive spectators. As to the performance itself, it is plain it is not a subject for the tongues of men; the tongues of men are not for a subject above the thoughts of angels; they are but desiring to look into it, they have not seen fully through it; that is the work of eternity. Men may speak and write of it, but it is not so proper to describe it as to tell that it cannot be described: we may write about it, but if all its glory were described, the world would not contain its books, John xxi. 25: we may speak of it, but the most we can say about it, is to say that it is unspeakable: and the most that we know is that it passes knowledge. It is he that performed this work that can truly declare it. It is he who contrived that can describe it. It is he who knows it: none knows the Father but the Son, or he to whom he shall reveal him. It is from him we should seek this knowledge, Eph. i. 17: what of it is to be had here, is but in part, 1 Cor. xiii. 9, but it leads us to the place where it will be perfect. Here we think as children, we speak as children: yet we are not therefore to neglect thinking or speaking of it; our thoughts are useless without contemplating it, our speech useless without praising it. The rest of the history of the world, except as it relates to this, is but a history of trifles or confusions, dreams and vapours of sick-brained men. What we can know of it here is but little; but that little incomparably transcends all other knowledge; and all other earthly

things are but loss and dung to it, Phil. iii. 8, and 11. The least we can do, is with the angels to desire to look into these things, and we should put up these desires to him who can satisfy them, that he may shine in our hearts by the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, 2 Cor. iv. 6. The true object of this knowledge is the glory of God; the means of obtaining it, is *light shining* from God; and as to the place into which it shines, it is into our hearts. We are, therefore, to desire that light from him who is light itself; but our prayers should be joined with other means; particularly, that meditation which Paul recommends to Timothy, 1 Tim. iv. 15: we ought to meditate on these things so as to give ourselves wholly to them. Our meditation should be as lively, and as like to seeing the object before us as possible. But it is not by strength of imagination that the soul is profited in this case, but by having the eyes of the understanding enlightened, Eph. i. 18.

The makers and worshippers of images pretend to help us in this matter, by pictures presented to the eye of the body. But it is not the eye of sense or force of imagination, but the eye of faith that can give us true notions and right conceptions of this object, 2 Cor. v. 16. Men may paint Christ's outward suffering, but not that inward excellency from whence their virtue flowed, *viz.* his glory in himself, and his goodness to us. Men may paint one crucified, but how can that distinguish

the Saviour from the criminals on each side of him? We may paint his hands and his feet fixed to the cross, but who can paint how these hands used always to be stretched forth for relieving the afflicted, and curing the diseased; or how these feet went always about doing good; and how they cure more diseases and do more good now than ever? We may paint the outward appearance of his sufferings, but not the inward bitterness or invisible causes of them. Men can paint the cursed tree, but not the curse of the law that made it so. Men can paint Christ bearing the cross to Calvary, but not Christ bearing the sins of many. We may describe the nails piercing his sacred flesh, but who can describe eternal justice piercing both flesh and spirit? We may describe the soldier's spear, but not the arrows of the Almighty; the cup of vinegar which he but tasted, but not the cup of wrath which he drank out to the lowest dregs; the derision of the Jews, but not the desertion of the Almighty forsaking his Son, that he might never forsake us who were his enemies.

These sorrows he suffered, and the benefits he purchased are equally beyond description. Though we describe his hands and his feet mangled and pierced, who can describe, how in one hand, as it were, he grasped multitudes of souls ready to sink into ruin, and in the other hand an everlasting inheritance to give them; or how these bruised feet crushed the old serpent's head, and trampled on death and hell,

and sin the author of both? We may describe the blood issuing from his body, but not the waters of life streaming from the same source, oceans of spiritual and eternal blessings. We may paint how that blood covered his own body, but not how it sprinkles the souls of others, yea sprinkles many nations. We may paint the crown of thorns he wore, but not the crown of glory he purchased. Happy were it for us if our faith had as lively views of this object, as our imaginations oft-times have of incomparably less important objects, then would the pale face of our Saviour shew more powerful attractives than all the brightest objects in nature besides. Notwithstanding of the gloomy aspect of death, it would discover such transcendent majesty as would make all the glory in the world lose its relish with us; we would see then indeed the awful frowns of justice, but these frowns are not at us, but at our enemies, our murderers, that is, our sins. The cross shews Christ's pitying his own murderers, but shews no pity to our murderers; therefore we may see the majesty of eternal justice tempered with the mildness of infinite compassion. Infinite pity is an object worth looking to, especially by creatures in distress and danger; there death doth appear in state, as the executioner of the law, but there he appears also deprived of his sting with regard to us. There we may hear also the sweetest melody in the world to the awakened sinner; that peace-speaking blood, that speaks better

things than that of Abel; the sweetest and loudest voice in the world, louder than the thunder on Sinai. Its voice reacheth heaven and earth, pleading with God in behalf of men, and beseeching men to be reconciled to God; speaking the most comfortable and the most seasonable things in the world to objects in distress and danger, that is, *salvation and deliverance*.

Of the various views we can take of this blessed work this is the most suitable, to consider it as the most glorious deliverance that ever was or will be. Other remarkable deliverances of God's people are considered as shadows and figures of this. Moses, Joshua, David, and Zerubabel, were types of this great Joshua; according to his name, so is he JESUS a deliverer. The number of the persons delivered shew the glory of this deliverance to be unparalleled; it was but one single nation that Moses delivered, though indeed it was a glorious deliverance, relieving sixty thousand at once, and a great deal more; but this was incomparably more extensive. The apostle John calls the multitude of the redeemed a multitude that no man could number, (Rev. vii. 9,) of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues. The unparalleled glory of this deliverance appears not only in the number of the delivered, but also in the nature of the deliverance. It was not men's bodies only that it delivered, but immortal souls, more valuable than the world, Matth. xvi. 26. It was not from such a bond-

age as that of Egypt, but one as far beyond it, as eternal misery is worse than temporal bodily toil. So that nothing can equal the wretchedness of the state from which they are delivered, but the blessedness of that to which they are brought.

But here we should not forget the opposition made against this deliverance. It was the greatest that can withstand any good design. The apostle (Eph. vi. 12,) teaches to consider the opposition of flesh and blood, as far inferior to that of principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. The devil is called the god of this world, 2 Cor. iv. 4, and himself and his angels the rulers of the darkness of this world, Eph. vi. 12. They had obtained a dominion over the world, (excepting that small corner Judea,) for many ages, by the consent of the inhabitants. They found them not only pliable, but fond of their chains, and in love with their bondage. But they had heard of this intended enterprise of supreme power and mercy, this invasion and descent upon their dominions. They had heard of the design of bruising their head, overturning their government, making their slaves to revolt. Long experience had made them expert in the black art of perdition; long success made them confident, and their malice still pushed them on to opposition, whatever be the success. As they were no doubt apprized of this designed deliverance, and alarmed at the signs of its approach; they made all prepara-

tions to oppose it, mustered all their forces, employed all their skill, and, as all was at stake, made their last efforts for a kind of decisive engagement; they armed every proper instrument, and set every engine of spiritual destruction a-working; temptations, persecutions, violence, slander, treachery, counterfeit Messiahs and the like.

Their adversary appeared in a form that did not seem terrible; not only as a man, but as one despised of the people, Psal. xxii. 6, accounted as a worm and no man. But this made the event more glorious. It was a spectacle worth the admiration of the universe, to see the despised Galilean turn all the artillery of hell back upon itself. To see one in the likeness of the Son of man wresting the keys of hell and death out of the hands of the devil; to see him entangling the rulers of darkness in their own nets, and making them ruin their designs with their own stratagems. They made one disciple betray him, and another deny him; they made the Jews accuse him, and the Romans crucify him. But the wonderful Counsellor was more than match for the old serpent; and the Lion of the tribe of Judah too hard for the roaring lion. The devices of these powers of darkness were in the event made means of spoiling and triumphing over themselves, Col. ii. 15. The greatest cruelty of devils, and their instruments, was made subservient to the designs of the infinite mercy of God; and that hideous sin of the sons of men, over-

ruled in a perfectly holy manner, for making an end of sin, and bringing in everlasting righteousness, Dan. ix. 24. The opposition made to this deliverance did but advance its glory, particularly the opposition it met with from those for whose good it was intended, that is, sinners themselves. This served to enhance the glory of mysterious long suffering and mercy.

It would take a long time to insist on all the opposition he met with, both from the enemies of sinners, and from sinners themselves; but at last he weathered the storm, surmounted difficulties, led captivity captive, obtained a perfect conquest, purchased an everlasting inheritance, founded an everlasting kingdom, triumphed on the cross, died with the publishing his victory in his mouth, That it was finished.

The world is represented as silent before the Lord, when he rose up to work this great deliverance. And, as was shown before, no part of the world was unconcerned in it. The expectation was great, but the performance could not but surpass it. Every part of it was perfect, and every circumstance graceful; nothing deficient, nothing superfluous, nothing but what became the dignity of the person, and the eternal wisdom of the contrivance. Every thing was suited to the glorious design, and all the means proportioned to the end. The foundation of the everlasting kingdom was laid, before it was observed by the men that opposed it, and so laid that it was impossible

for the gates of hell to prevail against it ; all things adjusted for completing the deliverance, and for securing it against all endeavours and attempts to overturn it. The great deliverer in that low disguise wrought through his design, so as none could oppose it without advancing it, to the full satisfaction of that infinite wisdom that devised it, and the eternal admiration of the creatures that beheld it.

The Father was well pleased ; heaven and earth rejoiced, and was astonished ; the powers of hell fell down like lightning : In heaven, loud acclamations and applauses, and new songs of praises began that are not ended yet, and never will ; they will still increase ; still new redeemed criminals from earth, saved from the gates of hell, and entering the gates of heaven, with a new song of praise in their mouths, add to the ever-growing melody, of which they shall never weary ; for that is their rest, their labour of love, never to rest, day nor night, giving praise and glory to him that sits on the throne, and to the Lamb at his right hand, who redeemed them from all nations and tongues, washing them in his own blood, and making them kings and priests unto God.

But still an objection may be made concerning the little honour and respect this work met with on earth, where it was performed. This, duly considered, instead of being an objection, is a commendation of it. Sin had so corrupted the taste of mankind, that it had been a kind of reflection on this work, if it had suited it.

Herein the beauty of it appears, that it was above that depraved wretched state which it was designed to cure ; and that it did actually work that change on innumerable multitudes of all nations.

If the cross of Christ met with such contempt on earth, it met also with incomparable honour : it made the greatest revolution in the world that ever happened since the creation, or that ever will happen till Shiloh come again : a more glorious, a more lasting change than ever was produced by all the princes and conquerors in the world ; it conquered multitudes of souls, and established a sovereignty over men's thoughts, wills, and affections ; this was a conquest to which human power hath no proportion. Persecutors turned apostles ; and vast numbers of Pagans, after knowing the cross of Christ, suffered death and torments cheerfully to honour it. The growing light shone from east to west ; and opposition was not only useless, but subservient to it. The changes it produced, are sometimes described by the prophets in the most magnificent expressions ; thus for instance, Isaiah xxxv. 7 : " It turned the parched grounds into pools of waters, made the habitations of dragons to become places of grass, and reeds, and rushes ; made wildernesses to bud and blossom as the rose." It wrought this change among us in the utmost isles of the Gentiles. We ought to compare our present privileges, with the state of our fore-fathers before they knew this blessed object ; and we

will find it owing to the glory of the cross of Christ, that we who are met here to-day, to worship the living God, in order to the eternal enjoyment of him, are not worshipping sun, moon, and stars, or sacrificing to idols.

But the chief effects of the cross of Christ, and which shew most of its glory, are its inward effects on the souls of men. There, (as was before hinted) it makes a new creation; Christ is formed in them, the source and the hope of glory: this is a glorious workmanship, the image of God on the soul of man. But since these effects of the cross of Christ are secret, and the shame put upon it oft-times too public, and since human nature is so much influenced by example; it will be useful to take such a view of the honour done to this object, as may arm us against the bad example of stupid unbelievers.

The cross of Christ is an object of such incomparable brightness, that it spreads a glory round it to all the nations of the earth, all the corners of the universe, all the generations of time, and all the ages of eternity. The greatest actions or events that ever happened on earth, filled with their splendour and influence, but a moment of time, and a point of space; the splendour of this great object fills immensity, and eternity. If we take a right view of its glory, we will see it contemplated with attention, spreading influence and attracting looks from times past, present, and to come; heaven, earth, and hell, angels, saints, devils.

We will see it to be both the object of the deepest admiration of the creatures, and the perfect approbation of the infinite Creator; we will see the best part of mankind, the church of God, for four thousand years looking forward to it before it happened; new generations yet unborn rising up to admire and honour it in continual successions, till time shall be no more; innumerable multitudes of angels and saints looking back to it with holy transport, to the remotest ages of eternity. Other glories decay by length of time; if the splendour of this object change, it will be only by increasing. The visible sun will spend his beams in process of time, and as it were grow dim with age; this object hath a rich stock of beams which eternity cannot exhaust. If saints and angels grow in knowledge, the splendour of this object will be still increasing; it is unbelief that intercepts its beams; unbelief takes place only on earth, there is no such thing in heaven or in hell. It will be a great part of future blessedness, to remember the object that purchased it; and of future punishment, to remember the object that offered deliverance from it; it will add life to the beams of love in heaven, and make the flames of hell burn fiercer; its beams will not only adorn the regions of light, but pierce the regions of darkness; it will be the desire of the saints in light, and the great eye-sore of the prince of darkness and his subjects.

Its glory produces powerful effects wherever it shines; they who behold this glory are

transformed into the same image. 2 Cor. iii. 18. An Ethiopian may look long enough to the visible sun before it change his black colour ; but this does it ; it melts cold and frozen hearts ; it breaks stony hearts ; it pierces adamants ; it penetrates through thick darkness. How justly is it called marvellous light ! 1 Pet. ii. 9. It gives eyes to the blind to look to itself, and not only to the blind, but to the dead ; it is the light of life, a powerful light, its energy is beyond the force of thunder ; and it is more mild than the dew on the tender grass.

But it is impossible fully to describe all its effects, unless we could fully reckon up all the spiritual and eternal evils it prevents, all the riches of grace and glory it purchases, and all the divine perfections it displays. It has this peculiar to it, that as it is full of glory itself, it communicates glory to all that behold it aright ; it gives them a glorious robe of righteousness ; their God is their glory ; it calls them to glory and virtue ; it gives them the spirit of God and of glory ; it gives them joy unspeakable and full of glory here, and an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory hereafter.

It communicates a glory to all other objects, according as they have any relation to it ; it adorns the universe ; it gives a lustre to nature, and to providence ; it is the greatest glory of this lower world, that its Creator was for a while its inhabitant. A poor landlord thinks it a lasting honour to his cottage, that he has

once lodged a prince or emperor; with how much more reason may our poor cottage, this earth, be proud of it, that the Lord of glory was its tenant from his birth to his death? yea, that he rejoiced in the habitable parts of it, before it had a beginning, even from everlasting, Prov. viii. 31.

It is the glory of the world that he who formed it dwelt in it; of the air, that he breathed in it; of the sun, that it shone on him; of the ground, that it bore him; of the sea, that he walked on it; of the elements, that they nourished him; of the waters, that they refreshed him; of us men, that he lived and died among us, yea that he lived and died for us; that he assumed our flesh and blood, and carried it to the highest heavens, where it shines as the eternal ornament and wonder of the creation of God. It gives also a lustre to providence. It is the chief event that adorns the records of time, and enlivens the history of the universe. It is the glory of the various great lines of providence, that they point at this as their centre; that they prepared the way for its coming; that after its coming they are subservient to the ends of it; though in a way indeed to us at present mysterious and unsearchable. Thus we know that they either fulfil the promises of the crucified Jesus or his threatenings. And shew either the happiness of receiving him, or the misery of rejecting him.

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IBR Nr. 6562
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